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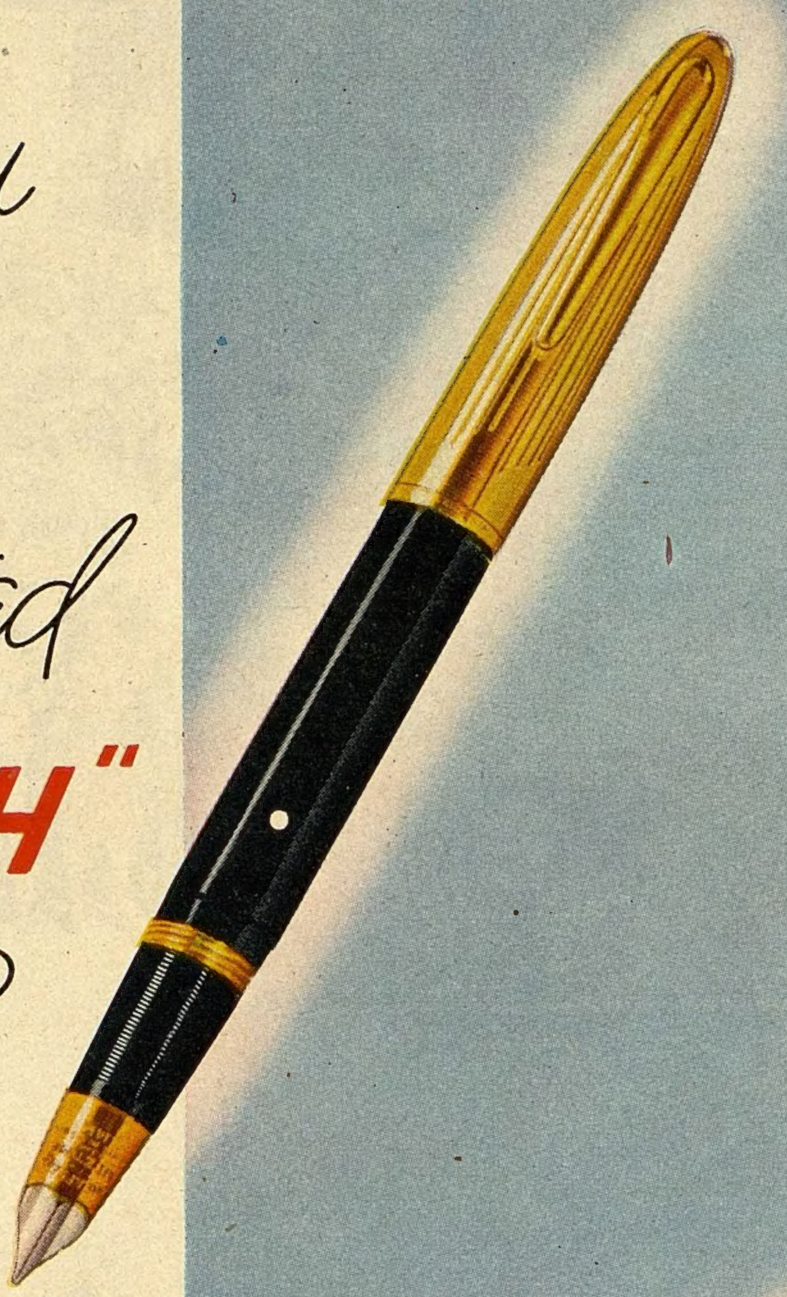

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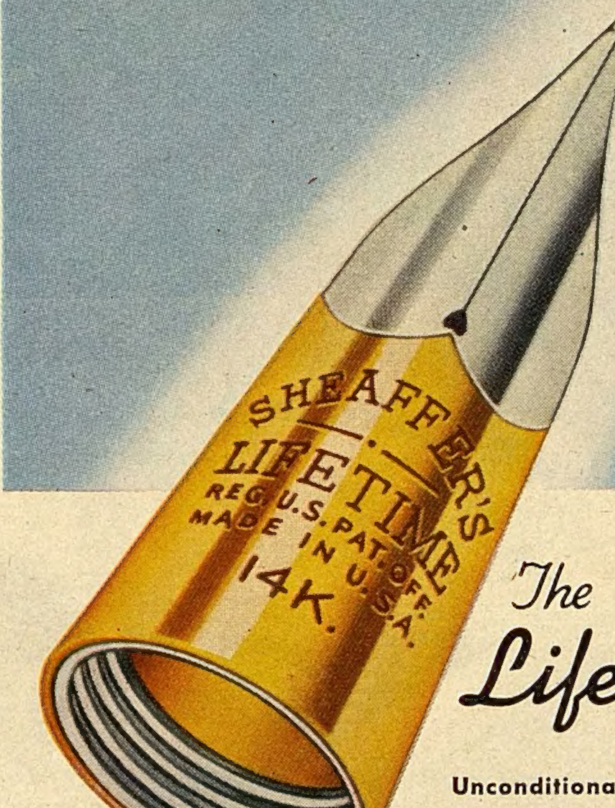

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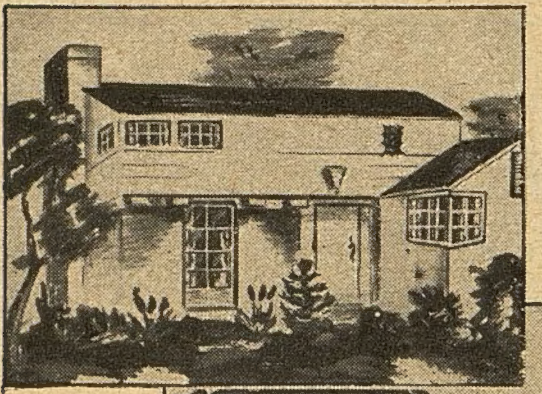

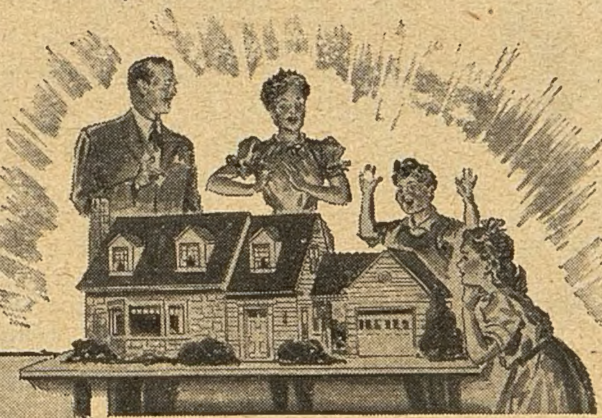

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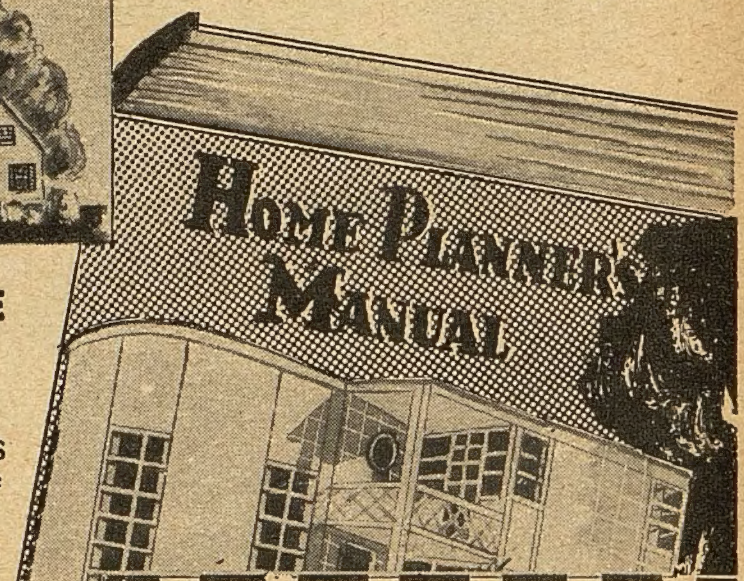

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RKO RADIO PICTURES

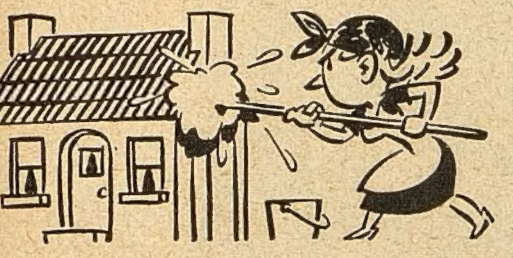
VOX POP

"The Voice of the People"

AMERICA, THE BEAUTIFUL

RED OAK, IOWA—Paul Hunter was right in his editorial, Is America Really the Beautiful? (April 20). It isn't, but it could be.

I served six years as a member of our city council, several of those years during the depression. Among other projects, we laid several miles of pavement on streets where the value of the property would not stand a special assessment. But the cost, under the WPA, was largely absorbed by the government.



I am sure you'd be amazed, as I was, to observe how quickly the residents along those streets began cleaning up their property, patching and painting the buildings, clearing away the rubbish, leveling the lawns and sowing grass seed. In fact, they began taking more pride in themselves and their children. Giving them a clean, decent street changed their outlook on life. They at once became better citizens.—*R. T. Will.*

VOX POP REUNION

PHOENIX, ARIZ.—Liberty reached across sixty-six years recently to reunite two ten-year-old boys, playmates in 1880 at Carrollton, Illinois. Those boys are now old men of seventy-six years and had never seen nor heard of each other in all that time.

It happened this way: One of the boys, John Slavens, wrote a letter which Liberty printed in Vox Pop. It was read by Charley Owens, the other boy, on the West Coast. A long-distance call came to the Slavens residence at Phoenix, and a strange voice asked: "How old are you?" "I'm seventy-six. How old are you—and why do you ask?" "I read your letter in Liberty and wondered if it could be the same John Slavens."

Then two oldsters nearing eighty became so excited recounting childhood exploits of the long-long-ago that they forgot to get each other's mail address. That's the reason for this letter. If you print it, perhaps Owens will again read and forward his city and street address.—*John Slavens.*

CRIME IN A NUTSHELL

PINEY FLATS, TENN.—The nearest thing to a perfect crime is the careless taking of umbrellas from places like the church cloakroom. My family has lost eight that way. I have fried down the entire idea into a nutshell:

> There is no perfect crime
> We hear the G-men chime
> But what of the fella
> Who took my umbrella?
> —*Sam Hughes.*

FIRST—THE ANTELOPE

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Mr. Gallico overlooks some well authenticated history in There's Romance in Railroads (April 20). The Empire State Express was *not* the first train to run at a mile a minute. In 1848 a special Boston & Maine train, sponsored by the road's superintendent, Charles Minot, and pulled by the appropriately named engine Antelope, covered the twenty-six miles from Boston to Lawrence, Massachusetts, in exactly twenty-six minutes.—*Freeman H. Hubbard, Research Editor, Railroad Magazine.*

SHE KISSED THE COW

TRAIL, OREG.—When I was the age Jean Amber sounds like in Vox Pop (April 20), I told my farmer dad, as Jean would have done, "I'll take the city. At least I don't have to wade in cow fertilizer up to my knees."

BACK TO THE FARM

After twenty years of bouts with the city bull, I took my hip-high waders and went back to the farm. I am the original old lady who said, "Everyone to his own taste," and kissed the cow.—*Mrs. Carma McCarthy.*

ON BEHALF OF THE VETS

WYANDOTTE, MICH.—Somebody once said a successful dog trainer just naturally had to know more than the dog. Maybe that is why Dave Connell (Vox Pop, April 20) had such a tough time with his G.I. hired help. Quite frankly, most all of the young vets I've been able to secure are doing their full share and I want more of them.—*Wesley C. Garey, Sr.*

THE METROPOLITAN CHORUS

NEW YORK, N. Y.—As public relations director of the Metropolitan Opera Chorus, I feel it necessary to point out certain misstatements in Dickson Hartwell's article, Opera on the Upbeat (February 9).

The article stated that the recent increase of nine dollars a week received by the chorus added more than $30,000 to the annual expenses. The actual increase was $18,086.40.

Then the author indirectly quoted top opera singers as saying that the chorus was unco-operative. Yet, in the 1942-43 season the Met was in financial difficulties and so the group took a five-dollar cut in salary.

Again the "top opera singers" complained of the chorus' "unique double-closed-shop system." The union policy of the chorus is controlled by "top opera singers" and the chorus holds a subservient classification in the American Guild of Musical Artists.

In the opinion of these "top opera singers most of the chorus should be fired, more than one third of its personnel being between sixty and seventy-five years of age with voices that quiver accordingly." There are five out of ninety-four choristers who are over sixty.

As for the statement that the union supplies the choristers and the Met has no say, an outline of the procedure for getting a job in the Met seems to be in order. The Met holds auditions as it chooses, without any members of the chorus being present. The management, however, must hire an A.G.M.A. member. To join the choristers' division of A.G.M.A. an applicant must know fifteen standard operas and pass an audition before a committee of five, three members of whom are choristers and two members from the board of governors of A.G.M.A. When the five agree, the acceptance of a new member must also pass the board of governors—and only three choristers are allowed to advise the board of thirty-two on chorus matters.—*Jack Petrill.*

NEW YORK, N. Y.—My article merely reported the facts as to how unions affect the quality of opera.

(*Continued on page 8*)

"I worry, every time you pack a bag!"

"Forget it, Mary," Tom Bunton reassured his panicky wife. "You know I never take chances on a crowded highway." But he WAS taking an awful chance. And Mary *couldn't* forget! She knew that over-confident Tom had neglected to get auto insurance . . . that an accident could have terrible consequences. One auto accident had cost her best friends their home and life's savings, and they were careful drivers, too!

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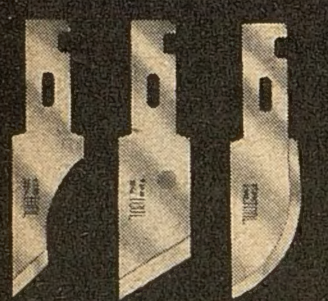

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*PAT. PENDING

(*Continued from page 6*)

My conclusions still stand.

As to figures on increase in wages, simple multiplication gives the increase in union income which Mr. Petrill quotes. But the funds had to be "scraped off the scenery," as the saying goes, and so the cost to the Met includes intangibles, such as loss of prestige (and customers) due to impoverished sets, inadequate rehearsals, and similar factors seriously affecting audience size. Estimates of this cost, plus the wage increase, run to $50,000; $30,000 is conservative.

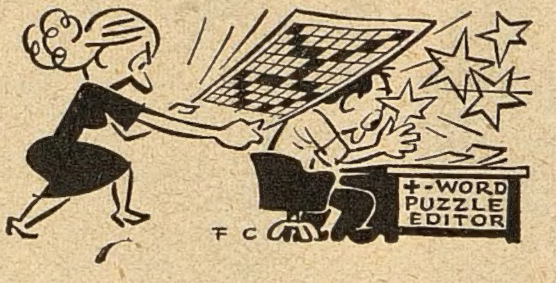
As to the number of members who are over sixty, I am sure Mr. Petrill doesn't really think the older lady choristers, or the men either, are going to reveal their correct ages.

Reams could be written on the relations of A.G.M.A. to the chorus union, not altering the fact that, rubber-stamp procedures aside, the chorus union does select its members by a system which sacrifices quality for maintenance of jobs.

When the union turns the responsibility for hiring choristers over to Met management, where it belongs, and makes its requirements for membership comparable to those of Actors Equity, then the union can avoid criticism for the performances of its members. As long as the union keeps a "double-closed-shop policy" it must accept responsibility for quality.—*Dickson Hartwell.*

WANDERING BLACK SQUARE

Conrad, Iowa—You certainly went off the beam with Ted Shane's puzzle (April 13). Putting a black square in the wrong place is enough to drive a puzzle fan crazy.—*O. E. Jacobs.*



Not a Cockeyed Crossword Puzzle fan!—Vox Pop Editor.

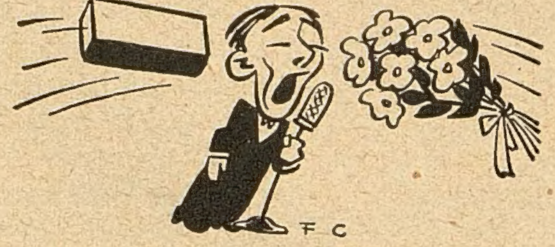
TWO SIDES ON SINATRA

New York, N. Y.—I have just finished reading Paul Gallico's panegyric about his "Frankie boy" Sinatra (April 13). I'd have tossed it aside with nothing more than a disgusted grunt except for his styling Sinatra as 135 pounds of "leather-tough fighting man." That made my blood boil! Where was this "leather-tough fighting man" when the war was on?—*W. R. Marsden.*

Where his country wanted him to be. Sinatra made three efforts to get into the service and was rejected each time for medical reasons.—Vox Pop Editor.

Los Angeles, Calif.—A salute to Citizen Sinatra, who could be my grandson in years!—*Mary Florence Griffiths.*

Colton, Calif.—Sure, I'm a Sinatra fan, a bobby-soxer, or what have you. But I think the people who won't put intolerant things out of their minds and who yell about the color, race, or religion of a person are just plain nuts. Maybe I shouldn't talk this way about my elders (and most of these people are older), but I do. It makes me mad. My hat's off to Paul Gallico—he knows a winner. —*Barbara Hamilton.*



Sanger, Calif.—Is it a coincidence that the letters on the mike Frank Sinatra is speaking into spell WIND? —*Robert Jamerson.*

Detroit, Mich.—When I was a kid, it was a gang fight with "niggers" in Detroit's Paradise Valley; and now, fifteen years later, I'm ashamed to say, it is still the same.—*Barney Leto.*

Enumclaw, Wash.—I thoroughly detest Frankie's moaning and drooling over the air, but I salute him, and gladly, for his courageous stand for racial tolerance and democracy. —*Fred Baker.*

THE POWER OF THE PRESS

Minneapolis, Minn.—Darn George Bostrom for writing, and Liberty for publishing, that letter (Vox Pop, April 13) suggesting spanking for juvenile delinquents. This morning I got in at 1.15 A.M. and there stood dad waiting to follow Bostrom's advice.—*Dorothy Burness.*

RICKEY'S BIG STEP

Glasgow, Mont.—I want to take this opportunity to compliment you on Charles Dexter's article, Baseball's Dark Question (April 6). Hats off to Branch Rickey of the Dodgers for the position he took by hiring a Negro in organized baseball.

I am a minister, and if a Negro minister can do a better job, I am perfectly willing to have him do it. —*Forrest B. Sharkey.*

Davenport, Iowa—Branch Rickey has made a dark error in violating an unspoken tradition.

Will our growing boys cherish the idols of baseball as the field grows darker?—*Stanley Smith.*

Ladies Last

No matter how rugged American men may feel, the bald truth is that women are healthier and live longer

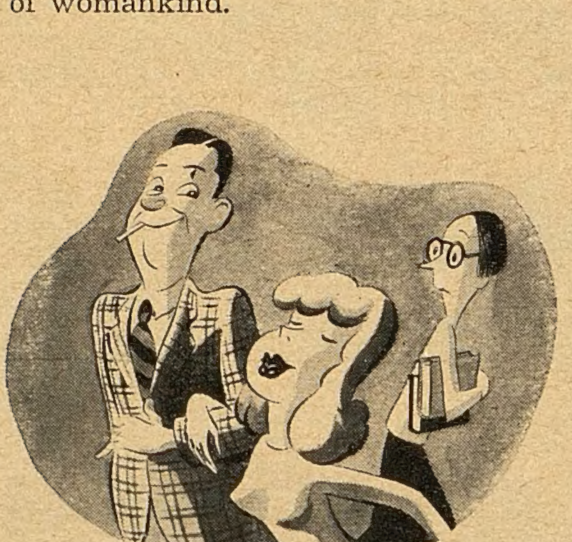
BY BERTON BRALEY

WHEN it comes to dodging the Grim Reaper, the female of the species is livelier than the male.

The superior toughness of the "weaker" sex is no modern phenomenon. For proof, see actuarial figures that go back to the heavily corseted, muchly petticoated ladies who used to swoon all over the pages of Victorian literature, and to whom migraines and vapors were an accepted state of feminine being. They show that these delicate creatures could expect to remain on the scene in their stiff stays nearly two years longer, on an average, than the supposedly rougher and robuster males. They were a droopy lot of dames by today's standards, but they still hung on the stem after the men had dropped off.

In that seventy-five years or so of actuarial experience, the figures show that the average life expectancy for both men and women has almost doubled—while women's two-year edge over men's expectancy has more than doubled. Women's freer and more active lives today have altered the ratio, but not the fact of women's superior endurance. It looks as though the female genes and hormones are just naturally more durable.

Of course there's the argument that women don't do much of the rough and dangerous work of the world—very few are miners or stokers or linemen, for example—but on the other hand, child-bearing is a rugged task whose hazards are not minimized by its being a normal function of womankind.



Highly educated gals often lose out to the graduates of grade school.

Anyhow, no matter what the explanation, women's greater longevity is an actuarial fact. Girl babies start life with odds of 6 per cent over boy babies, and girls hold the lead in all age groups from one to ninety-nine. Not until a man reaches the century mark does his expectancy equal that of a woman, and neither has much of it then—one and sixth tenths years. Since only one person out of 30,000 hits 100, this doesn't do the average man much good.

In addition to these general conclusions, actuaries have assembled considerable information about women in particular. Like other men, actuaries know less about the opposite sex than they do about their own; but there are a number of charts and tables that reveal the tenacious grip on life among women of various groups and types.

The country girl has more chances to wed than does the city worker.

First, actuaries agree that getting and holding your man is the surest way for a woman to hold on to life. Married women outlive spinsters, and have an even wider margin over widows or divorcees. According to the tables, the death rate among wives is 10 to 30 per cent lower than that of spinsters, 30 to 50 per cent less than that of divorcees, and 40 to 70 per cent under that of widows —the odds varying with ages.

However, the 7,200,000 sod and grass widows of the country (the proportion runs about nine sod to one grass widow) while not as long-lived as the married women or the spinsters, are more likely to remarry than the single ladies are to marry. In this competition the odds on the divorcee's getting a second husband before the widow does are more than three to two. The spinster runs a poor third: her chance of landing her first husband is only half that of the divorcee's capturing number two. At that, the single girl's chances aren't really so bad. At eighteen, it's nine to one she'll eventually marry; at twenty-seven, it's three to two on her being wedded; and it isn't until she's about thirty-five that the odds begin to run against her. Incidentally, the years between twenty and twenty-four are those most favorable for a girl to get her man.

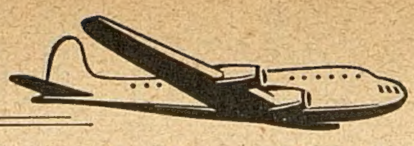
A kitchen job's riskier than one at a lathe, but it's nearer the altar.

BUT it's a sour statistical fact that, generally, the more education, the less marriage. College girls' chances, for instance, are way, way below those of the gals who barely scraped through grade school. At twenty or thereabouts the marriage rate for college girls is 25 per cent under that for grammar-school grads, and though the more learned lass runs a little better in the wedding stakes as she reaches and passes the thirty mark, she's still 10 per cent more likely to finish as a spinster than the one who never reached high school.

There are some geographic and occupational variations on this matrimonial theme. Putting it personally, if you're a Southern girl, you're more likely to marry, and marry younger than your Western or Northern rival.

Odds on the Dixie miss becoming a Mrs. are nearly two to one over the Western girl and about four to three

(*Continued on page 84*)



ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH

Here's a personal Cruisair, top speed 169 m.p.h.—and, for the helicopter fans who are all in such a whirl, here's a preview

DEFINITELY one of the better personal-plane buys for 1946, and one which is getting much comment around the country, is the Bellanca Cruisair Senior which began coming out of Bellanca's New Castle, Delaware, factory in April.

In its class—about 150 miles an hour cruising—the Cruisair is priced relatively low. Including built-in speaker, electric starter and generator, battery, and a few other essential items, it is priced at $5,375 at the factory.

With four roomy seats and good visibility, this low-wing job is built for cross-country roaming. Its 40-gallon fuel tank assures nonstop ranges of from 600 to 700 miles and its retractable landing gear makes for smooth performance and aerodynamic efficiency.

Top speed is 169 miles an hour and best rate of climb is 1,130 feet a minute. Take-off run with no wind is 435 feet and stalling speed with flaps is 45 miles an hour. By and large the Cruisair stacks up well alongside the other 1946 models. There are plenty of planes available at lower prices, but their cruising speeds are about 100 miles an hour. If you want an additional 50 miles an hour, you have to pay for it—and the Cruisair's cost for the additional speed is about the lowest in the industry.

Equipped with Aeromatic propeller and loaded to full gross weight, the Cruisair tips the scales at 2,100 pounds. Howard Ketchum, the noted color expert, is responsible for the interior styling. Bellanca has been known for sturdy and useful cargo planes. Now the company is off to a good start in the postwar personal-plane field.

Are Helicopters Hatching!

Though we still maintain that the inexpensive easy-to-operate private-owner helicopter isn't here yet by a considerable margin, our mail indicates an enormous amount of public interest in this potentially important aerial vehicle, and we'll do our best to report about the numerous projects which manufacturers are working on.

On the West Coast at Berkeley, California, young Stanley Hiller, Jr., founder of United Helicopters, Inc., who captured the public fancy some time back with his simplified two-place machine, is moving right ahead with production plans and expects to carry on many demonstration flights this summer.

His Commuter helicopter is powered with a 150-horsepower four-cylinder engine, and he expects to sell it for about the same figure as an airplane of equal horsepower. That would put it in the $5,000-to-$8,000 bracket.

The rotary wings consist of two sets of opposite rotating blades, driven by the air-cooled engine which is located behind the passenger compartment. A free-wheeling clutch permits auto-rotation of the blades and a controlled descent without the use of power. Conventional "stick" and "rudder" pedals are used to direct the movement of the machine, and a combination throttle and pitch-control varies the vertical and horizontal speed.

Since the counter-rotating blades neutralize their respective torques, the Hiller Commuter does not require a tail-rotor to stabilize the craft. This permits a smaller fuselage, better streamlining, and simplified controls. It also allows the rotors to be locked in a fore-and-aft position for parking in a garage or other small building.

Subject to alteration after many more flight tests, the Commuter will have a gross weight of 1,600 pounds and a weight empty of 1,080 pounds. Rate of climb vertically is 1,650 feet a minute and cruising speed ranges from zero to 100 miles an hour. Service ceiling is above 10,000 feet. Hiller claims he has simplified the operations so much that learning to fly the machine won't be difficult.

Meantime the Post Office Department has become very much interested in using helicopters to fly the mail from airports to downtown post offices. Look for contracts to be awarded, some time this year, for experimental demonstrations of expediting the mail. Quite a few companies are pushing their helicopter projects, notably Sikorsky Aircraft, Bell Aircraft, Kellett Aircraft, and McDonnell Aircraft.

How Fast Can a Star Shoot?

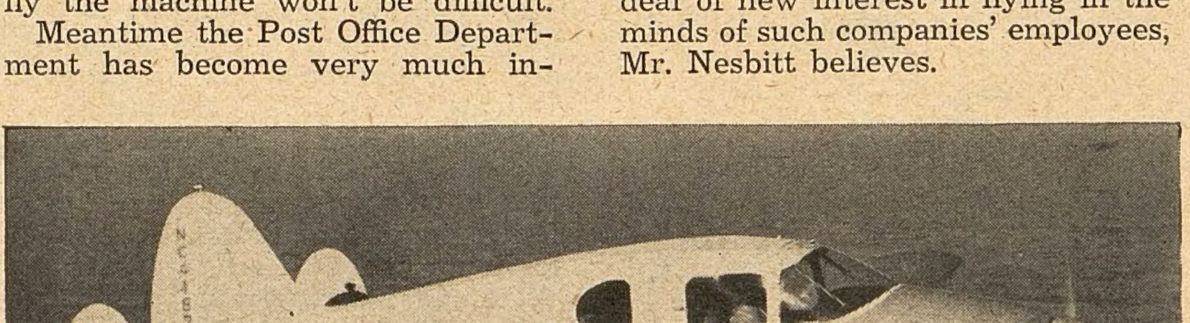
The jet-propelled Lockheed P-80 Shooting Star set a transcontinental speed record last winter, but nobody knows just how fast this sleek little airplane can go. The Army Air Forces is determined to find out, and its plan for doing so is something of a record in itself.

Some time this summer at Muroc Lake, California, the A.A.F. will send up the P-80 without a pilot and put it through intensive speed tests. The plane will be controlled entirely by radio, and since it will probably exceed 600 miles an hour, a lot of special equipment will be needed to record the speed accurately. For one thing, a television camera will be put in place and observers will record the plane's instruments in a mother ship flying in the vicinity. One test will be a vertical dive to determine the P-80's terminal velocity.

To old-timers it seems radical enough to have an airplane without a propeller, but to send the plane through its tests without a pilot—that, they feel, is getting to be almost too much!

Air Lines' "Competitors"

Will privately owned airplanes and corporation airplanes take away business from the air lines? Sydney Nesbitt, who's been selling private planes for fifteen years and is now president of Atlantic Aviation Corporation, New York, Eastern distributors of Beech Aircraft, doesn't think so. He thinks private flying is one of the best means of building up a higher potential of air travel. As for corporation airplanes, the air lines will lose the business of the executives flying in their own planes, but such activity builds up a great deal of new interest in flying in the minds of such companies' employees, Mr. Nesbitt believes.



In a Bellanca Cruisair Senior, the purchaser gets his money's worth of speed.

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES

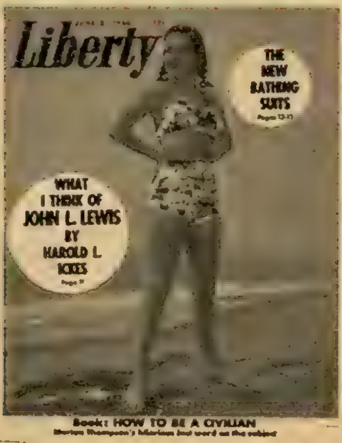
LIBERTY'S CORRESPONDENT

STACY V. Jones, our Washington correspondent, got that way by registering in journalism in college because another freshman told him it was a snap course. After a number of years of newspaper work and a tour of Wall Street, he wound up as a special assistant to Artemus L. Gates, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air. But the thrill of his lifetime came last September when he was surprised by a set of Encyclopedia Britannica and a $100 bond from Information Please for some questions he'd sent in seven years before. His latest article, SOCIAL SECURITY, LIMITED, appears in this week's issue.

PROFESSOR AND AUTHOR

THOUGH Sydney R. McLean's short story, DON'T LEAVE ME, GRANDMA (see page 32), is fiction, the background stems from Miss McLean's childhood. The farm she describes is in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, where her father was born and where she loved to visit as a little girl. She's now grown up to be an associate professor of English at Mount Holyoke College and the author of a best-selling novel, A Moment of Time, which was condensed in Liberty last July 7. Her double professional life doesn't leave much time for outside activities, but she does like to swim in the summer and to cook at home.

NEXT WEEK


Liberty
THE NEW BATHING SUITS
WHAT I THINK OF JOHN L. LEWIS BY HAROLD L. ICKES
Book: HOW TO BE A CIVILIAN

HOW come John L. Lewis holds the whip hand over America's economic life? Harold L. Ickes, who dealt with Lewis extensively during the war, gives the inside dope on THE MOST POWERFUL MAN IN AMERICA. . . . Eastern tennis monopoly is dead; the pros are BUSTING THE TENNIS RACKET. Bobby Riggs, their No. 1 man, tells of their plans to introduce the sport to the millions. . . . GYPSY, by R. Wilkes Hunter, is a strange and fascinating story of a girl no man should meet and the man whose troubled mind she will never leave. . . . In Liberty's Book Condensation, HOW TO BE A CIVILIAN, Morton Thompson offers some funny, often raucous and profane, but always sensible advice to the reconverting G.I.

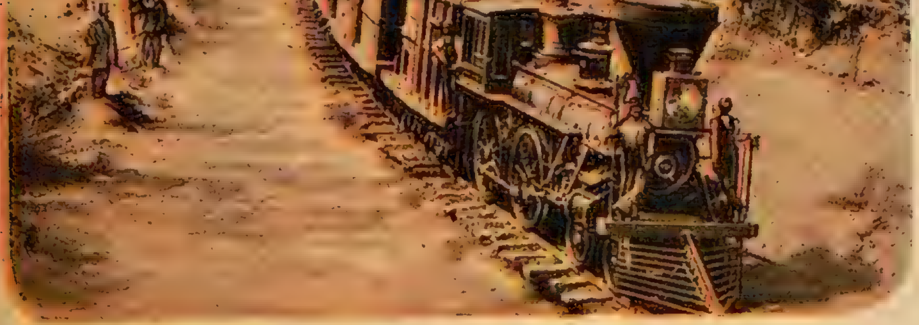
Here's why most Race Drivers specify Champion Spark Plugs

CHAMPION
PATENTED

THEY'RE DEPENDABLE!

The vast majority of racing drivers use Champion Spark Plugs because they can depend upon them to give championship performance. There are many reasons why this is so, but the end results are contained in the record books on racing—on land, water and in the air. They show that Champions are true champions, in fact as well as in name—a fact worth remembering when you need spark plugs for your car. Champion Spark Plug Company, Toledo 1, Ohio.

FOLLOW THE EXPERTS . . . DEMAND DEPENDABLE CHAMPIONS



NO HUGE STEAM SHOVELS to help early Pennsylvania Railroad builders! It was pick, shovel and muscle—as you can see from this old photograph.

Working

Since 1846, four generations of Pennsylvania Railroad men and women—working together as a team—have striven ceaselessly to improve transportation for the American people.

Each generation has made its vital contribution, left its mark on the roadbed of progress.

The first generation laid the immense framework, with few exceptions, of the present Pennsylvania System . . . The second double-tracked, triple-tracked, four-tracked —broadened and strengthened it . . . The third generation drove the tunnels under the Hudson River and built

Partners

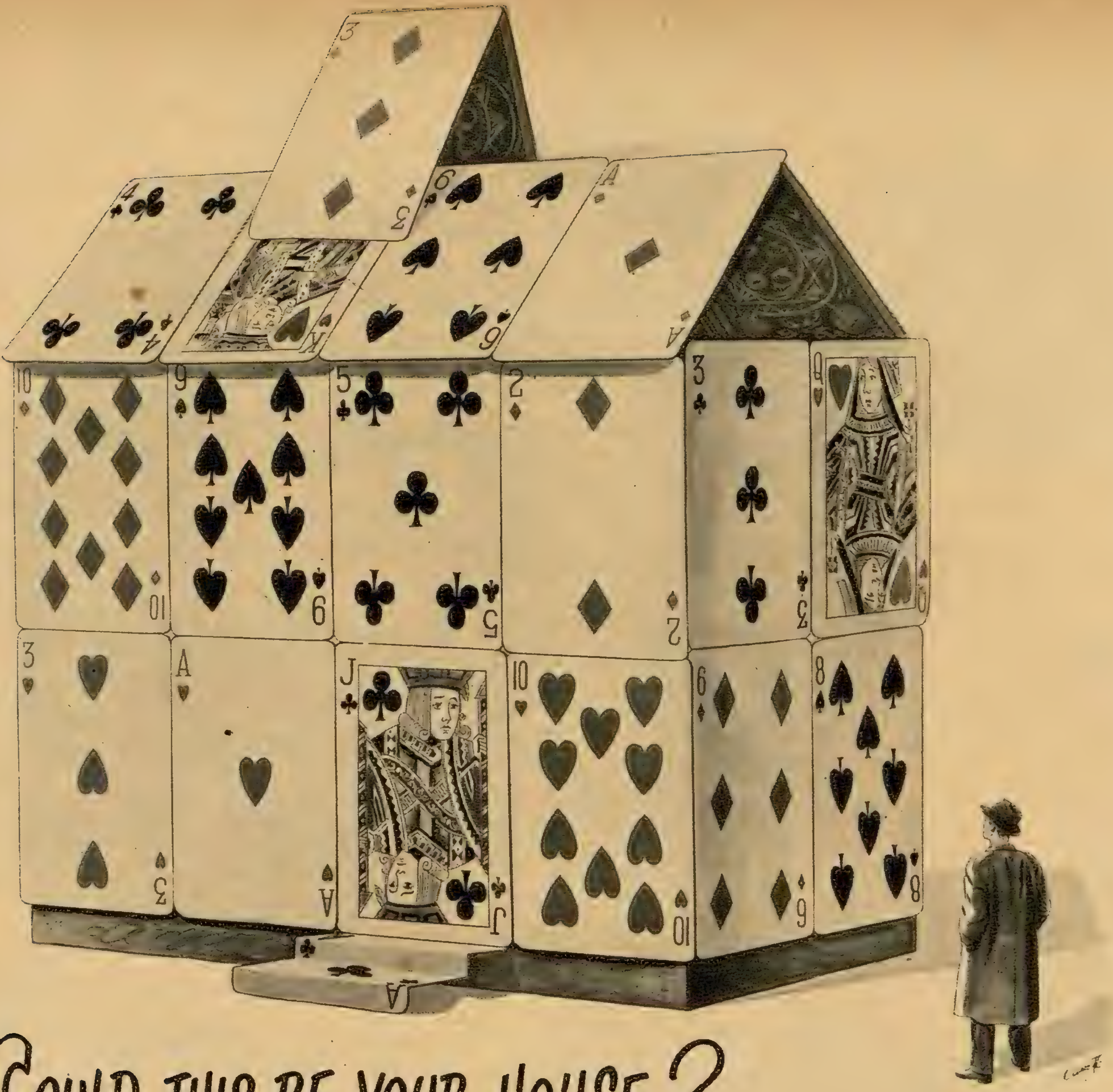
the great Pennsylvania Station in New York; linked New England with the Pennsylvania Railroad by bridging the East River at Hell Gate; electrified the railroad's Atlantic seaboard operation—and, in addition, helped to move the enormous numbers of men and materials that brought victory in World Wars I and II.

Today the fourth and newest generation, united with the third—altogether a working force of 160,000 employees—is not only meeting the day-to-day transportation needs of the American traveler and shipper—but building new locomotives, new cars, new technical equipment to carry on the work of progress so ably started 100 years ago.

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

1846 *1946*

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF TRANSPORTATION PROGRESS



COULD THIS BE YOUR HOUSE?

Now that the war's over and a lot more civilian goods are on the market, it's a big temptation to spend just about all you make, and not put anything aside.

But to fall for that temptation is plenty dangerous. It's like trying to live in the house above—a house that might come tumbling down about your ears at the first little blow of hard luck.

Right now the best possible way to keep your finances in sound shape is to save regularly—*by buying U. S. Savings Bonds through the Payroll Plan.*

These Bonds are exactly like War Bonds. Millions of Americans have found them the safest, easiest, surest way to save. The U. S. A. protects every dollar you invest—and Uncle Sam gives you his personal guarantee that, in just ten years, you'll get *four dollars back for every three you put in!*

If you stick with the Payroll Savings Plan, you'll not only guard against rainy days, you'll *also* be storing up money for the really important things—like sending your children to college, travelling, or buying a home.

So—anyway you look at it—isn't it smart to buy every single U. S. Bond you can possibly afford!

SAVE THE EASY WAY... BUY YOUR BONDS THROUGH PAYROLL SAVINGS

LIBERTY MAGAZINE

★ *This is an official U. S. Treasury advertisement—prepared under auspices of Treasury Department and Advertising Council* ★

Liberty
THE MAGAZINE OF A FREE PEOPLE

SIGNAL CORPS PHOTO

These workers in Ulm were patently not laborers when they were Nazis. Germans of the professions and the crafts are wielding shovels today.

Operation Lifebuoy

BY JULIET BRIDGMAN

A GAG currently heard in Germany concerns itself with an elderly well-dressed gentleman who is engaged in the menial task of sweeping the streets. A tattered fellow approaches him and asks, "*Na*, what do you think you're doing?"

"Very simple," replies the elegant one. "I was a Nazi, so they made me give up my law practice and now I have to clean streets."

"A fine how-do-you-do!" exclaims his companion. "I was a Nazi too, but they won't let *me* clean streets."

"And what were you before?"

Wiping away a tear, the tattered one nostalgically replies, "A street cleaner."

During the depression years in the United States it was not uncommon to see a Ph.D. digging a ditch, a former banker ringing doorbells in the hope of selling an insurance policy, or a licensed attorney begging the WPA for a job. It was tough going for the white-collar man then. He had been down-graded to either no collar at all or, at best, one of celluloid. But he had one thing that kept him going—he had hope. He was assured if he'd just hang on a little while longer, things would get better. As long as he could view his shovel as a temporary means to a better end, the shovel was bearable.

A similar situation exists in the American-occupied zone of Germany today, with the exception that the ousted professional man or the down-graded *Beamte*, or civil servant, isn't given much hope that his situation will some day change. He's got his hypothetical shovel, but he's stuck with it.

Our de-Nazification of Germany has been run in several phases. The first was to arrest the leaders, ranking officers, and men in authoritative positions in the party and intern them. This met with widespread approval. Then it turned out that after the big shots were safely put away, there were still a vast number of former party members at large. The directives that have since been put into effect in an effort to clean out the last vestiges of National Socialist influence in all branches of public and professional life prohibit the employment of any former party member in positions other than that of manual labor. The execution of this policy is referred to as "Operation Lifebuoy," and continues to be

(*Continued on page 65*)

Most Germans agree that the Nazi leaders should be punished, but they say what we are doing to their professional men and civil servants doesn't make friends for Democracy

Take That Vacation Anyway

EWING KRAININ PHOTO FROM FREDERIC LEWIS

For those who like mountains, Alberta's Lake Louise is a famous beauty spot, yet the best hotels charge less than $10 a day.

PHOTOS BY J. JULIUS FANTA

Like beaches? This country's three coasts are dotted with them. This one is Good Harbor beach at East Gloucester, Massachusetts.

Provincials who want to sample New York's limitless variety will enjoy the ride down the harbor to the Statue of Liberty.

Sure, vacationlands everywhere are going to be jammed, but if you know the angles, you won't have to stay home

BY LARRY NIXON

CARTOONS BY BILL O'BRIAN

TOURISM experts the world over face a strange situation. They're afraid you'll come, and afraid you won't. Housing for local people is far from abundant, even in communities that depend on tourist visitors for all their income, and reservations and inquiries about quarters are already pouring in.

The inclination of Chamber of Commerce and tourist board officials is to yell, "Wait! Come next year." Yet they know that isn't the way to build tourist trade. You can yell too loud.

They remember what happened when the New York World's Fair opened. News stories and radio broadcasts told of the huge crowds expected for the opening day. The public took it seriously and stayed at home. The Fair grounds were almost deserted in spots. In fact, some of the ticket gates opened in the expectation of the mad rush on opening day weren't put into service again for many weeks.

Don't compete with a convention.

So don't take for granted that your favorite resort hotel is all booked up. Find out for yourself. And then look at your own plans. You, too, can help. See if you can't put some leeway in your demands. If you have to go to Montreal when there's a national convention in session there, be prepared to sleep on a cot in one of the ballrooms of your favorite hotel. But if you want to be smart, do like the folks who went early to Florida last winter. There were plenty of vacant rooms in Miami before December 14, and not a place to sleep by January 15. Go when there's no crowd. Taking a vacation just ahead of the mob is always cheaper—sometimes it's more fun, too.

If you can't make your arrangements far in advance, and you are suddenly confronted with "No space" answers to your wires or letters asking for reservations, don't be too discouraged by reports of long waiting lists. Not everybody on a waiting list represents an actual customer. For example, if three air lines to California each report a thousand names on their waiting lists, don't think three thousand people want to make the journey. There's duplication of names on all three lists, and every time a new fifty-passenger plane goes into operation the totals melt away.

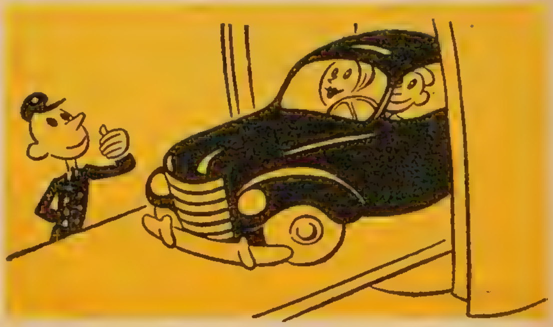
And not everybody with a paid-for Pullman berth can be counted on to ride the train. Scores of travelers throughout the war years moved about the nation, oftentimes in luxury and comfort, with never an advance arrangement for their space. Some business firms made a practice of purchasing tickets for every day of the month on the more popular routes—"just in case the boss wants a drawing room at the last minute." If no executive planned a journey, the tickets were turned in for refund a few hours before traintime. Latecomers often found space easy to get. On the less popular days of the week there were many late cancellations.

The traveler willing to check just before traintime, knowing he might have to wait over an extra day, usually managed—and he didn't sit up in a day coach either. More drawing rooms were canceled than upper berths.

There's also another little trick about train travel—taking your journey on the installment plan. Suppose you are bound from Mobile to New York and there's no berth to Manhattan. How about space to Washington? There are cars on the train that only go that far. Or even to Atlanta? Never mind your full journey for the moment. Once in Atlanta perhaps you'll find there have been no takers for the space reserved for Atlanta-to-New York travelers and you can go right along. If you do have to get off the train, a few hours' sight-seeing might not be amiss.

Vacation early and avoid the rush.

And despite stories of hordes of folks with "too much money to spend," it was easier all through the war, and it will be easier during the vacation season, too, to get expensive accommodations than to reserve the minimum-priced ones. A request for a suite at a Washington hotel is more likely to be honored than one for a minimum-rate room. The better hotels aren't always the most crowded.



LSTs are becoming ideal car ferries.

This doesn't mean that you have to travel de luxe. There are more cars on all-coach trains, more bus seats available, and more room in tourist homes today than in many, many months, and lots of war-inspired traffic will no longer be with us.

Prices for transport and at most hotels are set by law, and shortage-born OPA restrictions still apply in many sections, although the authorities have recognized the difference between in-season rates and those for the rest of the year. This is another point in taking your vacation before or after the rush. Mountain camps, for instance, offer bargain rates for the period between ski- and hike-trail days; and if you look around, there are plenty of other resorts where rates are low during the so-called off season.

Standard rates aren't beyond range, even if the bargain rail trips may not be restored this year, and some other low-cost prewar package tour offerings await more normal times. You can stay at the best hotel in Banff, Canada, for less than ten dollars a day. Bermuda has lots of hotel rooms at seventy dollars a week with all meals; and if you have your own tent, there are well-equipped camp sites in the state and national forests. Wood-floored sites rent for a few dollars a week.

You can find plenty of places to go. Pan American has a plane a day to Honolulu, with increased service promised if the traffic warrants. And visiting the lands across the Atlantic isn't too difficult this summer if you have a fair excuse. But unless there's some business or family reason for making the trip, you may have trouble getting a passport.

(Continued on page 83)

Social Security, Limited

Social Security is ten years old. But it's not as broad and husky as it should be, and a lot of people over 65 are still working. Washington is now trying to broaden Social Security so that more people will have a number

BY STACY V. JONES

John T. Quirk, 76, is a widower who tried retirement three years ago, but movies and ball games bored him. His job as doorman pays little, but keeps him happy.

WE have come a long way over the hill from the poorhouse since that day ten years ago when Social Security went into operation.

Many thought the millennium had arrived when the Social Security Board a decade ago sent workers the simple announcement that "there is now a law in this country which will give about 26,000,000 working people something to live on when they are old and have stopped working."

It was hardly the millennium, for old-age pensions so far won't provide a fat living, but they do help many an oldster. But the system has not only made good on its 26,000,000 figure, but has added millions more. In fact, there are now 84,000,000 people with cards and accounts numbers on file in the board's central records office in Baltimore. Of that number, only 74,000,000 have had wages credited to their accounts, and in a twelve-month period, between 45,000,000 and 50,000,000 accounts are processed.

It all proves that a government system of insurance can be made to work and ease the hardships of old age, and that, as far as records go, the whole operation can be centralized.

But in spite of the great progress made in broadening and liberalizing the program, old-age insurance today covers only three jobs out of five.

For example, one of the most vocal groups unprotected is the little business man—the self-employed. Operating a garage or a grocery as an individual and paying taxes for one or two employees, the little business man is unable to cover himself unless he incorporates. Others who have gripes against the system are the people who have contributed something through taxes and lost it by going into uncovered jobs. This happened to many thousands who took wartime government work that had no insurance protection.

Marie Vignec, 74, a childless widow, works because she likes people. Her job: coatroom attendant since 1915.

The Social Security Board has asked Congress to extend the insurance umbrella over the small business man and everybody else gainfully employed—over farm and domestic workers, government employees and employees of nonprofit organizations, all of whom are now excluded. The Board, citing 1946 living costs, also has recommended higher benefits, especially for the lower-paid workers, up to a family maximum of $120 a month. It would increase the earnings subject to tax, and counted in calculating benefits, from $3,000 to $3,600 a year.

When a carpenter is laid up, temporarily or permanently, the loss of his earnings hits his family budget harder than if he were out of work or even dead. Because he himself has to have not only food but also medical care. So disability protection has been recommended by the Board like that for old-age retirement. Both President Truman and the Board also renewed this year the recommendation that compulsory health insurance be added as part of the Social Security program.

What the Social Security Board really wants—although it will settle for less this year—is a single, simplified social insurance system, taking unemployment insurance away from the states. With one set of payroll charges and a single set of offices, protection could be given in this way against wage losses from sickness, disability, unemployment, old age, and death, as well as against medical bills. Relief, which is best administered close to the people, would remain a state job.

Arthur Hinchey, 66, a Staten Island ferry captain for 30 years, sees no reason to loaf on a $2,000 pension.

Old-Age and Survivors Insurance is the only part of our Social Security system run entirely by the federal government. The "and Survivors" part of the law was added by Congress in 1939. In addition to widows 65 and older, widows of any age with children under 18 are eligible, as are children themselves when there's no breadwinner in the family. Allowances for survivors are somewhat more generous than for oldsters. A widow with three children can receive the top the law allows a family: $85 a month. Few such families get the top allowance, but the average is somewhat more than $50 for a survivor group that size.

Some of the survivors are the widows and children of servicemen who were killed in the war before their rights expired, and the insurance benefits are paid without regard to any money received under the G.I. Bill of Rights. Ten million had credits when they entered the service, but they don't get any credit for time in uniform, and some have lost substantial rights because of their length of service. Congress has been asked to amend the law, and if it does grant service credit, the Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance will reopen 100,000 applications from widows of such men. Some have received nothing under the present law, and others who got something will be eligible for larger amounts if Congress acts.

Tilly Petrova, 66, earns $70 a week as a garment worker. Both her sons work, but she won't burden them.

Taxes on employers and employees support the Old-Age and Survivors system, and have built up a trust fund of about seven billion dollars in government bonds, since contributions began in 1937. At present the tax takes 1 per cent out of each dollar in the worker's pay envelope, and an equal contribution from the company's treasury. The law originally provided that the rate was to increase by easy stages until 1949, when it would reach 3 per cent from each. But Congress has held it down. It will jump next year to 2½ per cent, however, on worker and employer unless Congress again steps in.

PHOTOS BY MARJORY COLLINS

Railroading since 1901, George Morrison, 74, will stay on the job because he would detest idling. He organized a kids' baseball club in Ossining last year.

The question is sometimes asked why, if the present rate has met current benefits and built up a seven-billion-dollar trust fund, the interest on which is more than $100,000,000 a year, there is any need for higher taxes. The answer is that a heavy deferred liability, for the men and women who will reach 65 in a few years, is being built up. Perhaps we could run along for another decade at the 2-per-cent total, but by that time the demands would start eating into the trust fund and it wouldn't last long. In other words, the system won't be self-supporting if taxes aren't increased, and future generations will have to meet the deficit.

Public assistance or relief payments to adults are often higher than the old-age insurance benefits, especially in the western states. Indeed, out where the Townsend Plans begin there is a tendency to prefer pension schemes to insurance. Furthermore, states with large agricultural populations can't rely heavily on the present old-age insurance, which excludes farmers. The biggest assistance outlays per capita are in Colorado, Washington, Oklahoma, Utah, and California.

Everywhere the proportion of old folks in the population is growing and the retirement problem grows with it. Today less than 8 per cent of the population, or about 10,000,000, is 65 or beyond. By the year 2000 it is expected to be 13 per cent, or 21,000,000.

PEOPLE live longer in some states than in others. A census study for 1930-40 of persons living to age 70 showed most favorable conditions to be in the north central states—the Dakotas, Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska. The central states as a whole showed a better record than the Atlantic seaboard, and the North had the edge on the South, except for non-whites.

If you're 40 today, you'll have the company of nearly 16,000,000 oldsters in this country when you reach 65. If you have been earning $3,000 or more since you got your Social Security card, and continue to do so for the intervening quarter century, you may expect to draw about $54 a month as the law stands now. With a wife also 65, you would draw

(Continued on page 73)

ATLAS ASSURANCE
VIROL
SCHWEPPES
TONIC WATER
GORDON'S GIN
WRIGLEY'S
FOR VIM AND VIGOUR
LONDON PAVILION
PATRICK KELLY HENRY
WOMEN IN BONDAGE

Whenever U. S. films played on Piccadilly Circus, British movie makers saw red: it meant British cash gone to Hollywood for keeps.

Why Britain Hates Hollywood

There's a bitter new war on in Britain, with American movies the enemy, and $70,000,000 is at stake

BY ALFRED ERIS

London.

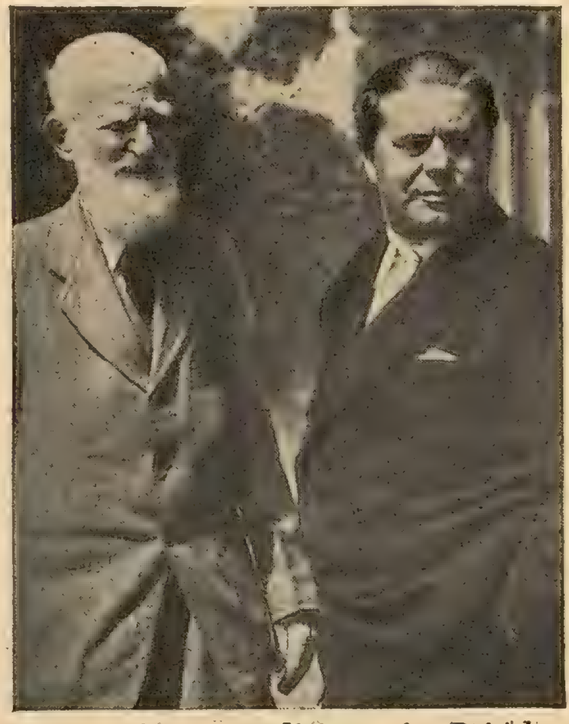
A NEW Battle of Britain is raging. This time it is being fought with Hollywood as the enemy. It involves Britain's food crisis, Britain's dollar credits in the United States, and perhaps even the British loan. It may eventually mean a battle for the box offices of the world.

"Hollywood big business is getting away with murder," screams a London newspaper in a two-page attack calling on the government to "stop the ridiculous 70 per cent exemption for Hollywood, freeze American dollars here, cut the quota of American films allowed in Great Britain."

The 70-per-cent exemption refers to the fact that Hollywood pays income tax on only 30 per cent of the money made in Great Britain by her films.

British editorial writers also counsel: "You want your food and your cinema. You can have both if you see more British films, instead of letting so vast a proportion of the money you pay go to America."

The first large-scale barrage against Hollywood started last November. Answering the gripes of members of Parliament about the U. S. "take" from Britain, the secretary of the Department of Overseas Trade promised efforts to cut down the amount of money sent across the Atlantic for films and, at the same time, increase the British yield from the United States. This was elicited in response to persistent attacks, from Conservatives and Socialists alike, on Hollywood, its methods, its attitude, etc. For a while the staid House of Commons looked like a clambake of the "United Americanophobes Association" in full swing.



Top writer, top director in British moviedom: Shaw and Gabriel Pascal.

Proposals of all types were made, with each new suggestion arousing whoops of joy from those who considered themselves martyrs to Hollywood. One politician proposed: "Let us become the forty-ninth state of the American Union, and move ourselves into Washington to get some advantages instead of all the disadvantages of complete economic domination by America." And when a Britisher says that, he's boiling mad.

Less picturesque suggestions also were made to reduce film-hire costs (immediately affecting Hollywood) and taxing exhibitors to build up the British film industry. And when the fact that Hollywood pays income tax on only 30 per cent of its "take" was dragged into the Parliamentary spotlight, the press jumped in with both feet. It came up gasping: "At this moment British people are going without food to see a Hollywood version of life in Essex that is quite idiotic!" Strong words, but listen again: "While British people have

The British are not only complaining, they're competing. Their Caesar and Cleopatra, which took two years and $5,000,000 to shoot in England and Egypt, stars Stewart Granger, Vivien Leigh and Claude Rains. United Artists will release the Technicolor film here.

to go short of meat and fats—because the country cannot afford dollars for food—it is preposterous that we should be flinging twenty million pounds a year across the Atlantic for rolls of celluloid." And, mind you, these are conservative British editorial writers.

And as an example of the battle shaping up, there was the recent attempt by the J. Arthur Rank combine, the most powerful financial group in British films today, to show only British pictures to UNO delegates. Only after yells which could be heard from Burbank to Leicester Square was space made on the bill for U. S. films on two dates. Such tactics will come into increasing use with the rival forces jockeying for key positions.

Laurence Olivier, star and director of Henry V, shivers on a frigid set. The haircut is strictly Elizabethan.

The star system, on which Hollywood films stand, also is being fought with personal appearances by British stars to build up the local equivalent. Britain doesn't know how to make big overpowering musicals or super-epics, but it's doing the next best thing—capitalizing on the market for "escape" films by making costume melodramas. One such, The Wicked Lady, is cleaning up a fortune throughout the United Kingdom.

And of Britain's nationally distributed newspapers, the most hotly anti-Hollywood are the tabloid London Daily Mirror and the London Daily Mail. A careful check of all national papers reveals that these two emphasize every item of importance to the anti-Hollywood bloc.

The Mirror recently published the results of its "authoritative national poll" of its readers. In large type over its front page, it trumpeted: "Eight in every ten voters say, 'We want food before films, grub before glamour.'"

The Daily Mail, which once supported Sir Oswald Mosley, the British Fascist, is playing jingoism for all it is worth. It announced awards for the best British film and the best British actor and actress who appeared in any picture made in England during the period from 1939 to 1945. Vivien Leigh, who is as British as they come, was disqualified from this poll for not having made a British picture during these years.

To some observers, this adds up to an all-out attack which means the end of Hollywood's long and glamorous reign. Government, press, critics, industry are all combining to force the moviegoer to see British whenever he thinks of the "flickers."

These are no empty threats. There are millions and millions of pounds marshaled here for the battle, and although no distributor will dare, openly, to criticize Hollywood and risk being quoted, they point to hard, cold figures which tell the story. You can't prove the screen critics guilty of conspiring with the industry, but some may be accused

(Continued on page 76)

Just as England was worrying over her Burma losses, Errol Flynn won the campaign. The British burned.

Sir Skunk

The next time someone calls you a skunk, thank him for the compliment. Friend skunk is our most maligned mammal

BY JOHN HIGHTOWER

Petunia, one of the Bronx Zoo skunks, displays the fondness of all her kind for eggs. She noses this one playfully, until . . .

WHEN you call a man a skunk, you are ready either to fight or to run. Yet the term should be highly complimentary.

The skunk is a gentleman. *Mephitis mephitis,* as he is formally known, is a well-dressed yet unassuming chap who is inclined to attend strictly to his own business. Although he possesses one of the most feared weapons in the animal world, he uses it reluctantly and only in self-defense. Moreover, he always gives fair warning before bringing it into play. Should the United Nations show as much judgment in the use of the atomic bomb, mankind would have little to fear.

The skunk is aptly named. "Mephitis" means a foul or obnoxious odor, and his double-barreled appellation is a decided understatement. But that odor is a controlled power, used entirely at his discretion.

It stems from an amber-colored liquid musk, secreted by two glands lying on each side of, and underneath, his tail, which are controlled by a sheath of muscles whose only function is its ejection. That musk is, moreover, one of the most effective choking irritants in nature. It is discharged through a duct connected to these glands, and the animal can guide the spray with the accuracy of a sharpshooter for distances of from four to ten feet.

Contrary to popular misconception, the skunk never "fans" the liquid with his tail. As a matter of fact, he's punctilious about avoiding contact with it. It is a strange fact that when two skunks battle to the death, neither combatant uses his most deadly weapon, both adhering to a sort of gentleman's agreement. Too, Meph can shoot from any angle, and the misguided enemy who thinks he is safe until the skunk presents his rear is in for a horrible surprise.

His weapon, incidentally, is no single-shooter. It's a repeater; he can deliver up to eight or ten volleys of the musk, although more than one is rarely necessary. Never is his battery unlimbered without three unmistakable warnings: first, he shows temper by stamping his front feet on the ground, a gesture so comical in itself that the uninitiated may ignore its import; next, his tail goes aloft, signal that his battle flag is lashed to the mast, but with a drooping tip; when that tip raises, his patience is at an end, and it is usually too late for the object of his irritation to do anything about it.

Some men hold that a skunk cannot eject his musk if he is lifted by the tail. The theory is that once his hind feet clear the ground he is powerless to contract the governing muscles. I know of at least one case where the skunk hadn't heard of it.

The skunk is one of our most widely distributed mammals, ranging from Hudson Bay through the Northwest Territories to the north, and south to Mexico. If the decision is left to him, he shows a disposition to live in friendly proximity to man. In spite of the heavy demand for his hide, and his utter lack of suspicion of even the most obvious forms of traps, his disdain of birth control ensures that his tribe will hold its own in spite of persecution.

Like most animals, he is rarely found in forest depths. His chosen bailiwick is on the fringes of civilization, and he is a home body, infrequently traveling more than a half-mile radius from his den. He is also an admirable family man and inclined to monogamy. Father skunk discreetly goes about his business when the young are born in the early spring; but as soon as his mate will permit it, he returns, and the family lives as a unit until the arrival of next year's mating season. There are few more appealing sights in the animal world than father and mother skunk taking their children for a leisurely airing and introducing them to the mysteries of the outdoors.

They are hibernators like the

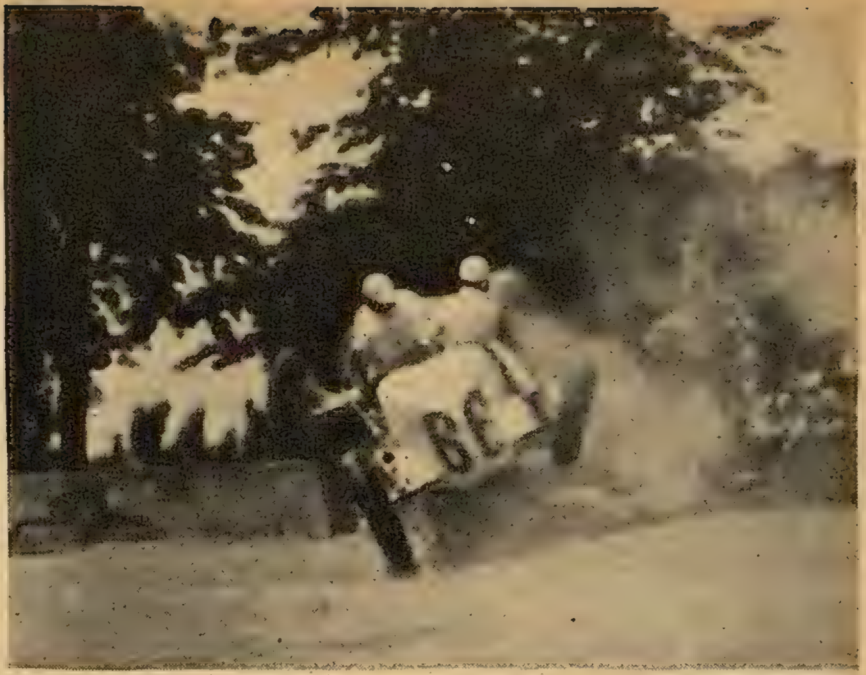
(*Continued on page 80*)

PHOTOS BY YLLA

her cavortings crush the shell, and the feast begins. This appetite gains skunks the hatred of farmers and hunters.

INTERNATIONAL PHOTO

Gaston Chevrolet wound this Monroe up to an average of 88.5 to win at Indianapolis in 1920—the year he was killed in it.



INTERNATIONAL PHOTO

Losing fight with a high-speed skid. The car tipped over, but Al Gordon and mechanic Frank Howard walked away.

Torture Track

It's not all thrills and spills on the Indianapolis motor speedway. A lot of people risk their necks in the big race so that you may save yours

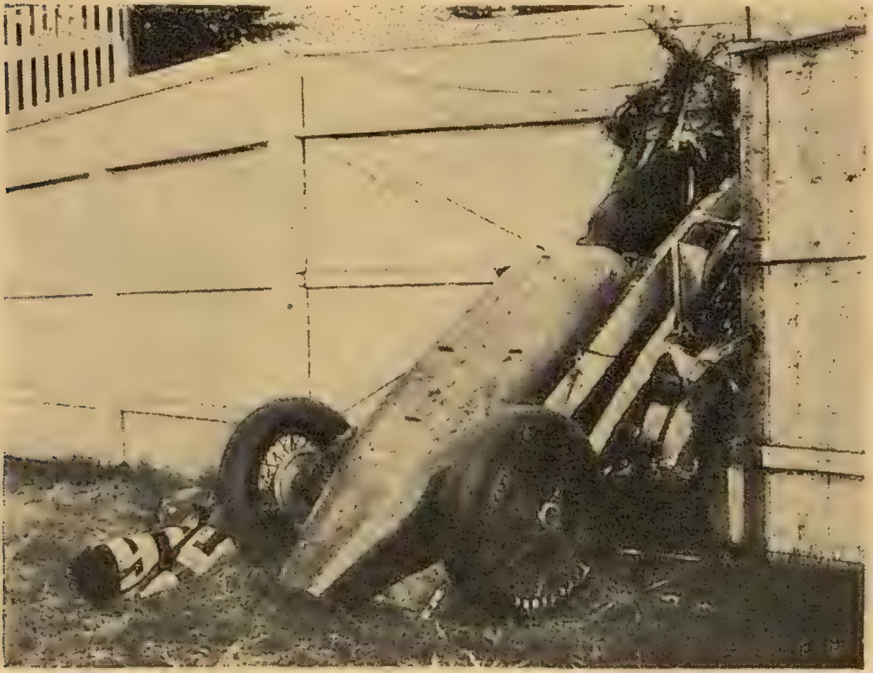
BY STANLEY FRANK

THE world's biggest sports crowd since the war—a probable 150,000 souls—will be drawn to Indianapolis for the 500-mile automobile race on Memorial Day, a war casualty since 1941. As always, most parishioners will view the event as a great Midwestern carnival. Others will be hungering for the morbid thrill that comes when a car careens crazily at 125 miles an hour and the life of a man hangs by the threads in the smoking side wall of a tire. And amid the high hilarity and hysteria perhaps 100 men will see the spectacle's significance in its proper perspective.

They will be the outstanding technical experts of the automotive industry on their chief assignment of the year. For them Indianapolis once again will be, as it has been since 1911, the most exacting laboratory in their profession.

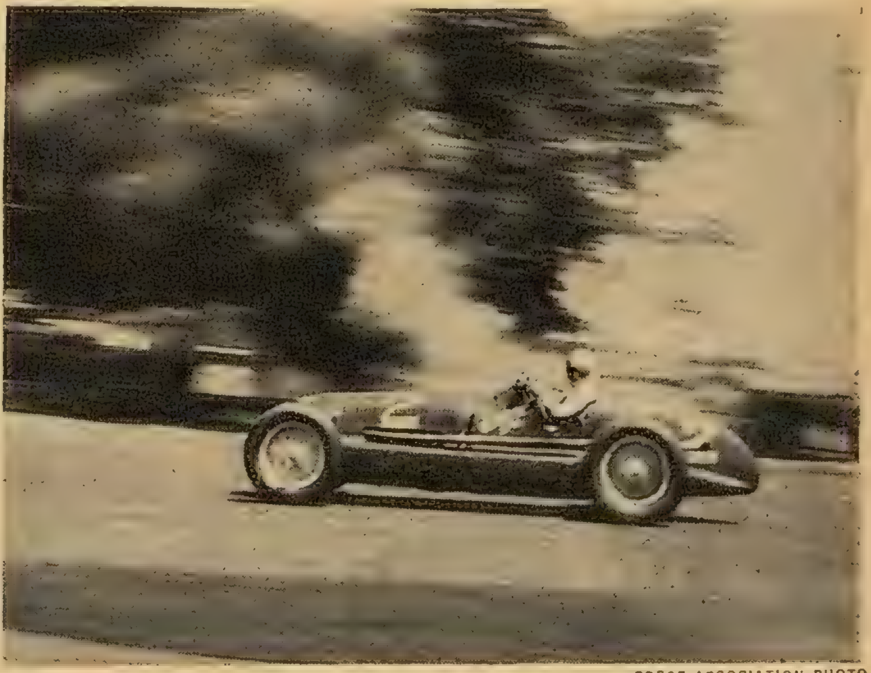
Men have been killed seeking the rich prizes at Indianapolis, but for every life lost on the Speedway, countless thousands have been saved on the highways of the nation. If your car has had normal maintenance, you can drive without giving a thought to the reliability of your engine, steering mechanism, tires, and brakes. The thinking and worrying were done for you at Indianapolis, where every worthwhile improvement in these vital parts of your car was introduced, tested, and checked by heavy-footed daredevils. Your jaloppy is cheaper to run because fuel economy in the race can mean the difference between $35,000 and nothing more than a hot, exhausting drive to nowhere. You can buy the best and most economical automobile in the world because the grueling lessons of Indianapolis have been built into every car on the road.

A dramatic history of Indianapolis' contributions to the automotive industry was presented in capsule form in a routine test run in 1937 by Ralph DePalma, the old master. He drove a stock LaSalle 500 miles at an average speed of 82.19 miles an hour, and consumed one pint of oil. Ray Harroun won the first race in 1911 in a Marmon with an average of 74.59 m.p.h., and used up thirty gallons. DePalma changed one set of tires merely as a precautionary measure; Bob Burman changed forty tires in 1911 in 310 miles. The LaSalle (*Continued on page 70*)



INTERNATIONAL PHOTO

Stubby Stubblefield crashed to his death like this while trying for position in 1935. The records say: "Failed to qualify."

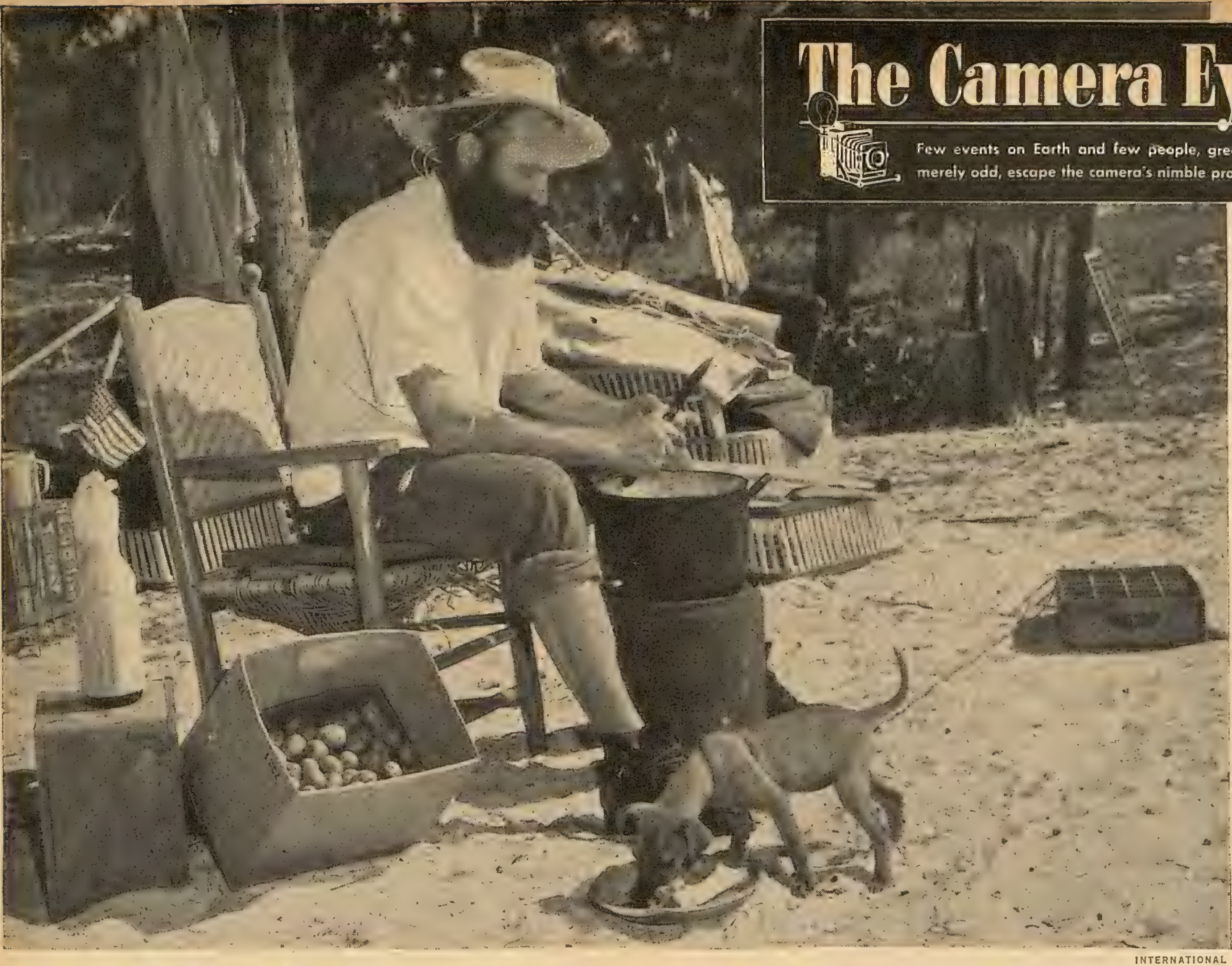


PRESS ASSOCIATION PHOTO

Wilbur Shaw's 115 m.p.h. won in 1939, but he couldn't resist this glance at the flaming wreck in which Floyd Roberts died.

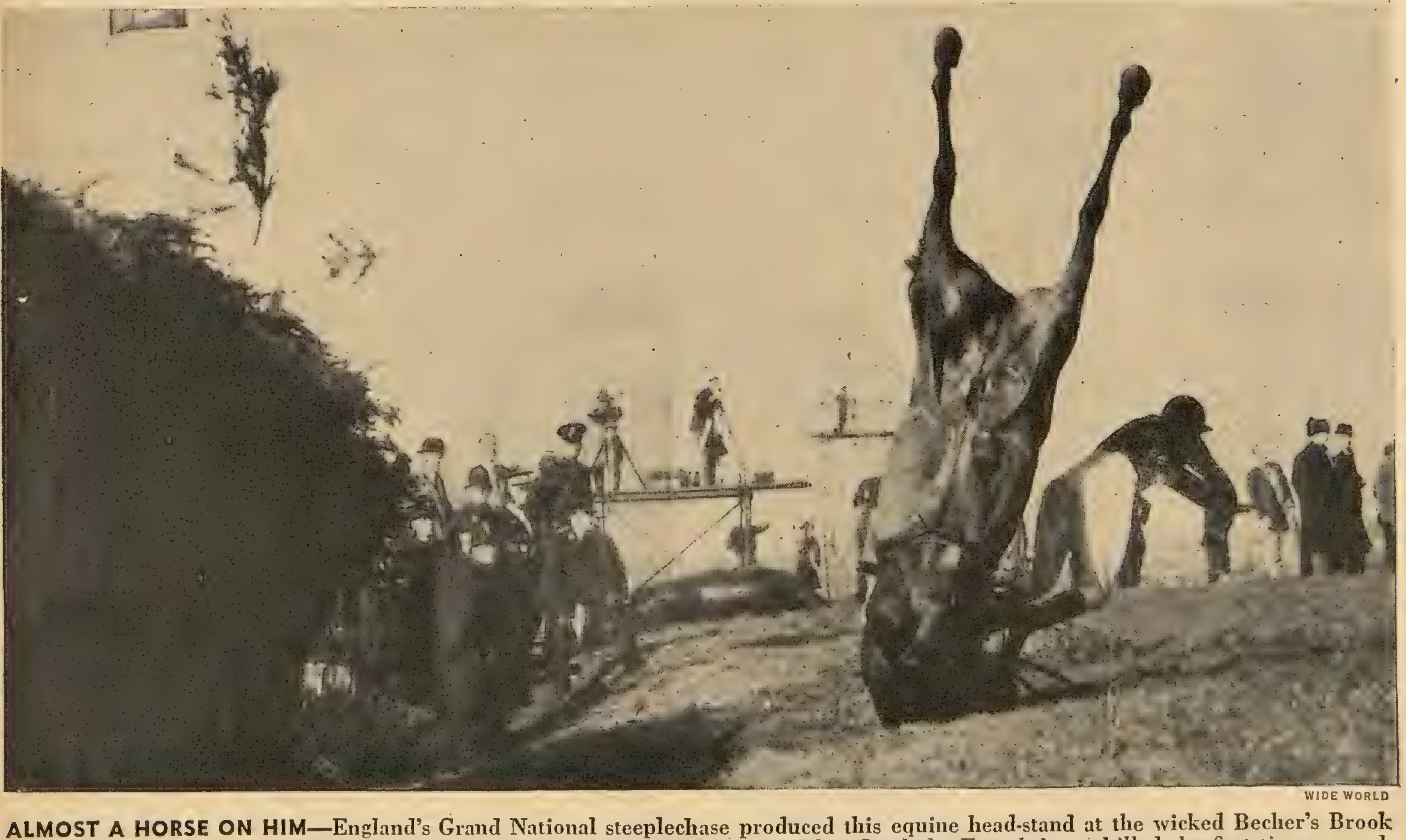
The Camera Eye

Few events on Earth and few people, great or merely odd, escape the camera's nimble probing



INTERNATIONAL

NO HOUSING WORRIES FOR HIM—Martin L. Pickett of Chattanooga, a former Seabee, established squatter's rights on an islet a mile off Miami's shore. No rent, no traffic, no razor blades to buy, he and his pooch eat well—and what a lovely stand for a flag!

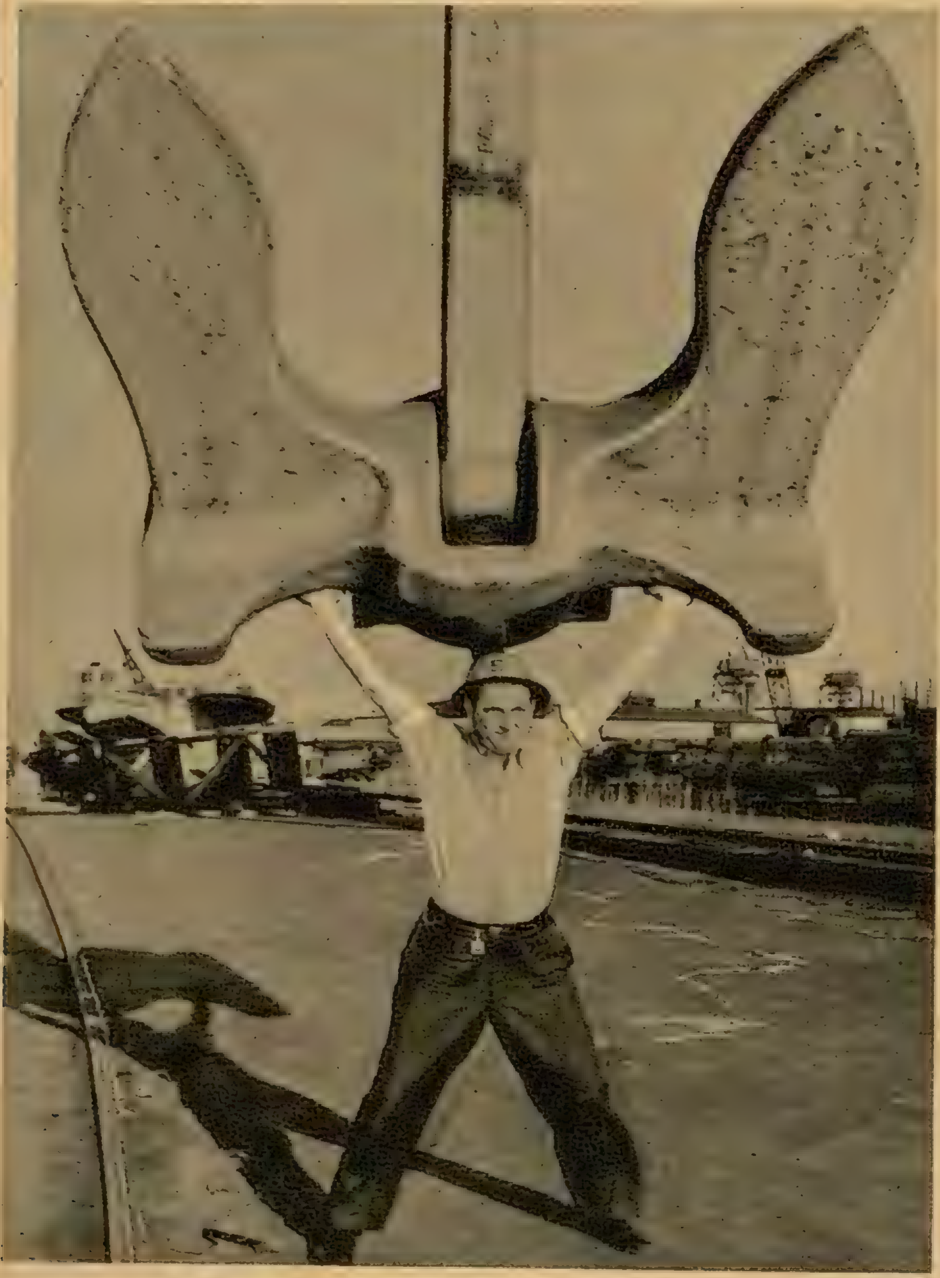


WIDE WORLD

ALMOST A HORSE ON HIM—England's Grand National steeplechase produced this equine head-stand at the wicked Becher's Brook jump, but neither Largo nor his rider, J. Cooke, was hurt. In the background lies Symbole, French horse killed the first time around.

THAT'S A POKE, SON—When the Navy staged its own junior boxing championships at the Annapolis gym, Billy Carr, left, defeated Ricky Craighill. They fought in the 45-pound class.
INTERNATIONAL

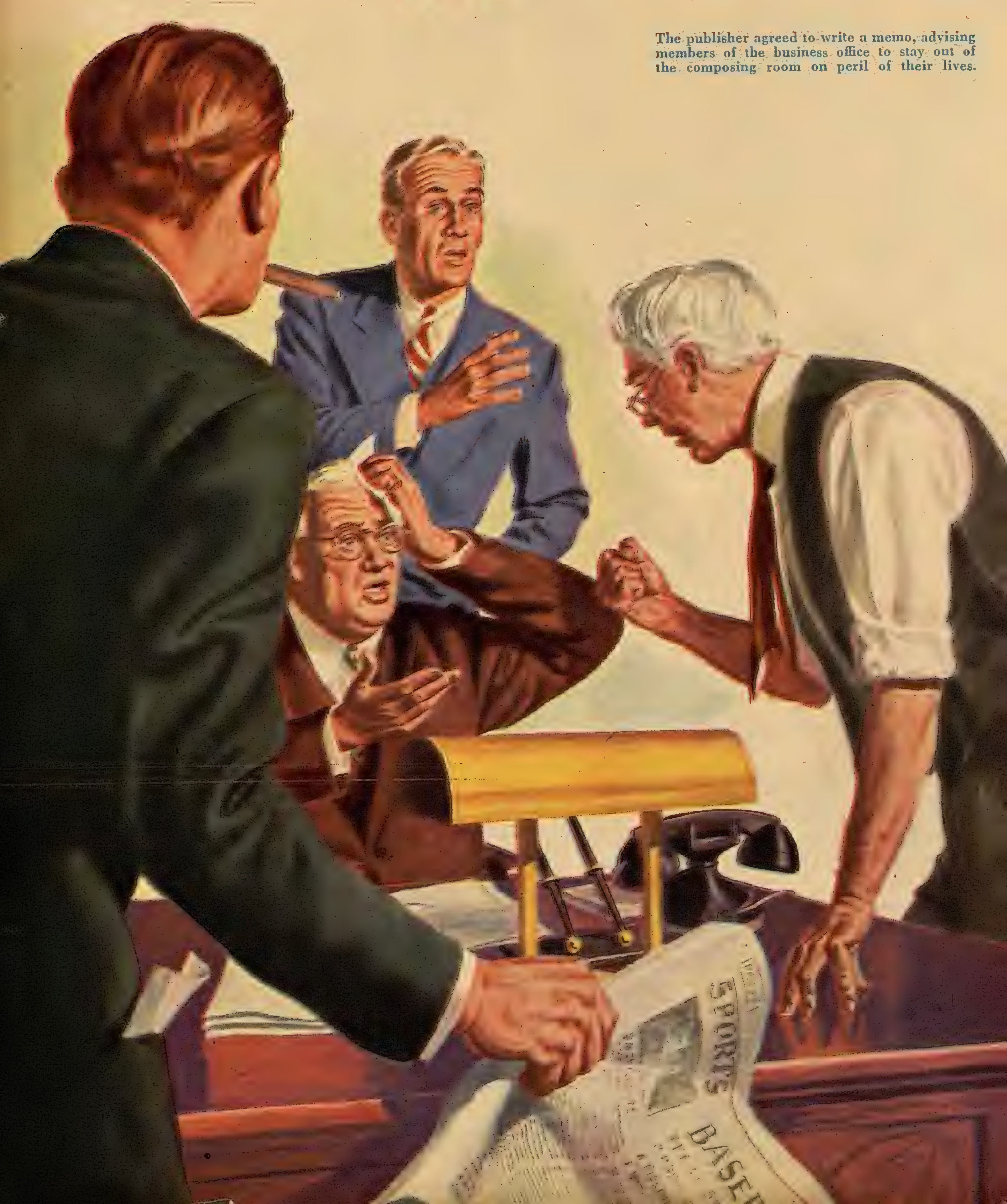
CANDIDATE—Seventeen-year-old Barbara Wardell appears here as merely another of Miami's manifold attractions, but actually this picture is her entry in the contest to determine the 1946 Sweater Girl. What valiant group of heroes will do the judging?
INTERNATIONAL



THE CAMERA DOESN'T LIE?—You could award Arthur Collins a title as champion hold-up man on the strength of this picture, except that most of that seven-ton anchor is supported by a big crane. The gag was snapped at a shipyard in Kearny, New Jersey.
INTERNATIONAL

The Unhappy Union Boss

The publisher agreed to write a memo, advising members of the business office to stay out of the composing room on peril of their lives.



"Three-quarters of you never do an honest day's work," declared Mr. Benjamin solemnly. Which was strong talk—coming from the head of the union

BY GORDON MALHERBE HILLMAN

ILLUSTRATED BY MARTIN GULSER

MR. THOMAS BENJAMIN arrived at the Courier Building with a great feeling of good will toward everyone. This did not diminish when the already ascending elevator suddenly reversed its progress and returned for him—an honor which was not accorded to the managing editor or even the publisher.

"Morning, Mr. Benjamin," called the elevator man.

"Good morning! Good morning!" said Mr. Benjamin with almost imperial affability.

Indeed, Mr. Benjamin actually was of imperial stature, for he was president of the editorial workers' union.

His regal air was entirely due to that circumstance, for in appearance he was a long, lean, spare Yankee with pepper-and-salt hair, a tight thin face and twinkling blue eyes that testified to a wry sense of humor.

A great many other people in New England looked rather like Mr. Benjamin, but none of them was a rewrite man on the Daily Courier.

He alighted from the elevator and passed into his kingdom, which was the huge disorderly space which served the Courier as city room.

The clock said ten, which meant Mr. Benjamin was on time; the assistant city editor was clipping the papers and meditating on his debts; two office boys were chewing gum; the fire tapper was pounding out an alarm; and Mr. Stephen Jackson was at his desk, deep in industry on the typewriter.

"Morning, Steve," said Mr. Benjamin, and Mr. Jackson said, "Uh."

This indicated that Mr. Jackson, large and plump, with a choice sprinkling of reddish freckles and nearly no hair, was turning out something for Sensational Detective Stories on the company's time—a circumstance of which Mr. Benjamin was quite aware.

Mr. Benjamin took off his neat brown hat and tan topcoat, unlocked his desk drawer and took out the rubber cushion for his chair.

He then demanded, "Who opened the side of the house?" and slammed down the window which Mr. Jackson had taken great care to open.

Geraldine Wells came in the door, eager and intense, a tall, blonde, willowy girl whose cheeks went fire red when she was embarrassed, excited, or upset—which was most of the time.

"Morning, Geraldine!"

"Morning, Ben."

Mr. Benjamin made a mental note that Geraldine was an unusually handsome girl and that if she got any more intense, she would probably blow up.

He swung about in his chair. "Boy!"

An untidy young woman with carrot-colored hair, a broad blank face, a purple sweater, a violent green skirt, white socks, and alarmingly large bare legs appeared at a gallop.

"Yes, sir."

"Coffee and doughnuts," said Mr. Benjamin and waved his finger at Herbert Crackercrumb, who had just settled on the window sill. Herbert was a large condescending sort of pigeon who inhabited lodgings at the Federal Building, made an excellent living about town, and gave the impression that he was conferring a great favor by turning up at all.

"Herbert," said Mr. Benjamin, "you're a scoundrelly rake."

Herbert pecked at the window and looked pleased with himself.

THE carrot-haired girl deposited a carton and a paper bag on Mr. Benjamin's desk. She put down change, and Mr. Benjamin slid a dime toward her. "Thanks, Phyllis."

Phyllis pushed the dime back. "Aw, not for just going across the street."

Mr. Benjamin's eyebrows went up and even Herbert betrayed some surprise. Mr. Benjamin dunked one doughnut in the coffee and crumbled it up for Herbert: the other he ate himself. They were interrupted by a shuffling sound, and there stood two office boys.

The taller one said, "We want to complain to the union."

Mr. Benjamin leaned back in a judicial attitude.

"That Phyllis is too rough," said the second office boy.

"We was only fooling with her," said Office Boy Number One, "and she grabbed me and bounced me up and down on the marble floor."

Mr. Benjamin, immensely delighted, advised them to stop fooling with Phyllis. The union, he said, wouldn't countenance it.

The office boys, considerably confused, went away.

Mr. Benjamin's phone rang lustily and the sporting editor wished to complain to the union. It seemed that on the preceding night, an individual from the business office had dared to descend to the composing room and, in terms of some profanity, had denounced the editor's choice of a lead story for the sports page. In the ensuing uproar, the business-office gentleman had knocked a rack of type to the floor and all the compositors had promptly threatened to walk out.

Mr. Benjamin, undismayed, hung up his phone and beamed upon the peaceful scene before him. The assistant city editor was bawling, "Where's that camera to go to the fire?" all the phones were ringing, and the managing editor wanted to know what damned donkey had stolen his chair.

To Mr. Benjamin it still seemed nice and peaceful, full of faithful union members who were suitably grateful to their hard-working president, though inclined to be slightly backward in their dues.

The union was Mr. Benjamin's child and he was fond of it. It had raised salaries, it had shortened hours, it provided for its members in sickness and in health, and it had put in an air-conditioned system which didn't work.

He saw Mr. Ferguson, the dramatic editor, scuttle into the room, looking fearfully over his shoulder. He diagnosed Mr. Ferguson's trouble and concluded it must be bill collectors—a common complaint.

He picked up the phone and told the publisher he wanted to see him.

The publisher was always ready to see the head of the union, and Mr. Benjamin, rising, was startled by the shining look in Geraldine's eyes. She was getting more intense.

Mr. Ferguson went out the door as if all the finance companies in town were after him.

MR. BENJAMIN got the sporting editor and the foreman of the composing room and shepherded them to the office of the publisher.

They were both in a state of volcanic indignation, and the sporting editor promptly launched on a libelous survey of the ancestry of the interloper from the business office.

"So," he concluded, "he comes up and says to me—"

"He was probably stiff," put in Mr. Benjamin pacifically.

"Stiff as a goat," said the sporting editor, who had not previously considered that circumstance.

The publisher smoothed down his hand-painted tie. "Well, if he was—er—inebriated, that explains—"

"He touched type," snarled the composing-room foreman.

The publisher sighed. He well knew that after type is set, it is a high crime for anyone but a compositor to handle it.

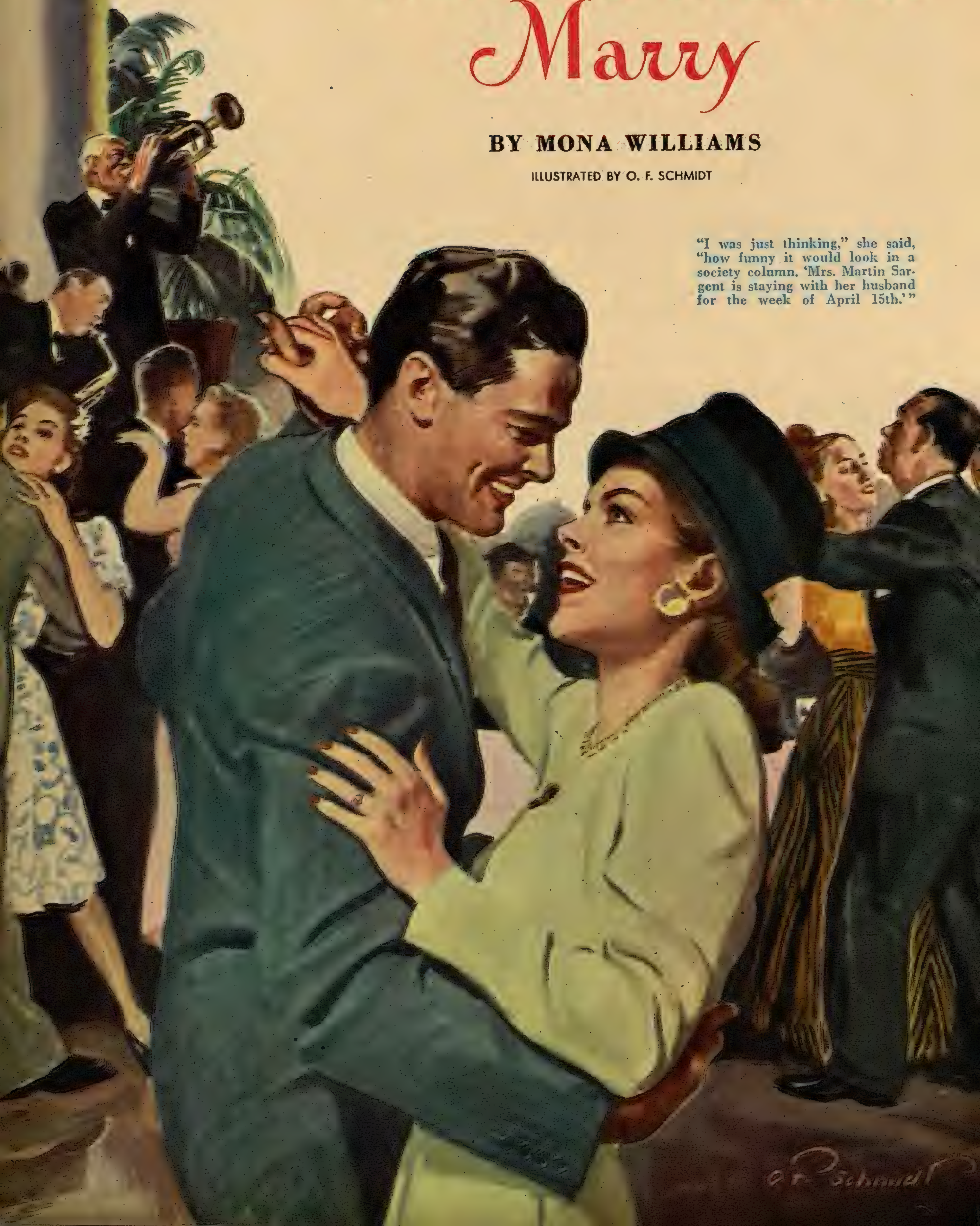
"Well, technically, yes; actually, no," Mr. Benjamin suggested. "After

(*Continued on page 57*)

When Children Marry

BY MONA WILLIAMS

ILLUSTRATED BY O. F. SCHMIDT



"I was just thinking," she said, "how funny it would look in a society column. 'Mrs. Martin Sargent is staying with her husband for the week of April 15th.'"

All honeymoons have to end sometime—but that's when marriage begins. Josie and Mart had to learn this fact the hard way

TO Josie this was the wonderful thing, worth all the vulgar, sympathetic curiosity of her friends concerning herself and Mart—if the telephone rang when she was expecting him to call, her heart still turned sick with anticipation. After two years he could do that to her.

Her sister, Vera, always beat her to the telephone because her side of the room was nearest the door, and Josie would stand in the upper hall, shuddering with expectancy, waiting. Then Vera's voice with the dry, sisterly note:

"Oh, it's you! Why don't you get a walkie-talkie just to be sure you never get out of touch? Sure she's here. Josie! Mart."

As she skimmed down the stairs, her mother's voice followed her: "Josie, don't forget it's Thursday. Don't disappoint daddy."

"I know—I know!"

The thing was that he was calling. He still wanted to spend every evening with her. But she must be careful. No gratitude in her voice when she answered. Never let a man *know*.

"I wish I could make it, Mart. Truly I do! But it's Thursday. We always have dinner out somewhere, you know, and go to a movie. It's a family affair."

Together, in low voices, Josie kicking the phone cord behind her into the privacy of the coat closet, they protested the autocracy of families.

"Josie, I got to thinking about you last night and I couldn't sleep. I got up and wrote you a letter—you'll get it in the morning. Crazy stuff—read it and burn it up."

"I'll learn it by heart."

"Darling. Listen. Can't you skip the family tonight? This is special."

"Oh, Mart!"

"Tell your Dad this is special. Next Thursday I'll be good."

Like a suitor, conciliating her father all over again, as he had in the beginning. No one, listening to this, would guess that for two years they had been married to each other.

It was a new kind of marriage, without any roots. They had had a week's honeymoon before Mart went into the Army, and during the long time of their separation their letters had had the yearning, expectant quality of courtship. They had learned to live with the sense of continually marking time, that life was always just around the corner, that nothing was ever *now*.

When Mart first came back, they had talked about getting a place for themselves. But there had been so many things in the way—the housing shortage, and Mart not having a job at first, and Josie's parents having just redecorated hers and Vera's room, all in girlish blond wood and ruffles, and the new bathroom just put in. And they were so young.

Plenty of time for responsibilities later on.

Then there was Mart's mother. She was a widow with two younger boys, and while Mart was away she had had a tough time holding the family together. Mart figured he owed her a little aid and comfort. So, temporarily—his and Josie's favorite word—he had moved back into his own room with the deer hide tacked to the closet door and the class picture on the bureau beside his old football. And across the town, Josie slept in a Hollywood twin bed with a quilted headboard beside her sister Vera.

They weren't the only ones. Hugh and Doris Connelly had been married three months and had no place of their own yet. Doris was still living with a married brother and Hugh stayed on at the Y.M.C.A. And the little Raymond girl, who had eloped at sixteen, was permitted to have "dates" with her husband so long as she still lived under the family roof.

HOW long had Mart been home now—five months, half a year? Sometimes Josie wondered if he ever woke up in the middle of the night and had a queer feeling that life was like a book that kept opening to the same chapter. Of course it was pleasant to be young and irresponsible and comfortably housed with parents who still thought of you and your sister as "the kids." And at the same time to have Mart—your husband, your lover, calling every day, wanting to spend every evening with you.

You never said to yourself, Why not? When people get married they expect to spend every evening together. You expected nothing. For a rootless marriage, the first rule was to take nothing for granted.

Vera was impressed. She watched Josie get ready for Mart. She said admiringly, "Of all the smooth operators! Two courtships out of one man—flowers and fancy compliments and dinner dancing at the Rumba Room. From a *husband!*"

Josie was instantly on the defensive. "Mart's making money now. Is there any reason why he shouldn't spend it on me?"

"Well, I thought you were saving up for furniture."

"Oh—furniture! We want a little fun first."

"Is that what you and Mart got married for—to have fun?"

"Not exactly," she said softly. "We fell in love, I suppose, and wanted to belong to each other."

"But you don't belong to Mart," Vera said reasonably. "You still belong to mother and dad. You had to get their permission to go out with Mart tonight."

"Oh, Vera—for heaven's sake!" Josie turned in exasperation. "That was just a courtesy because it's family night. You know how dad is!"

Vera said calmly, "You never think of you and Mart being a family. You could be, though—if you wanted to."

Josie stared at her. "A family, Mart and I—" Her voice wasn't quite steady. "That's a very corny idea. Mart's barely twenty-one. Why should we settle down—"

The bell rang and her face brightened as though a light had been turned on.

THE Rumba Room was expensive; it didn't cater to young people. Young couples saved their money for an electric icebox or a washing machine, or maybe to have a baby. You saw girls with men twenty years older at the Rumba Room. And bored middle-aged couples. Sometimes you saw Josie and Mart. Mart never thought of buying Josie a washing machine. If you were crazy about a girl you bought her roses with stems a yard long, and took her to the smoothest place in town for dinner. That was love.

Dancing between the crabmeat cocktail and the Chicken Suprême on the three-dollar dinner, she felt Mart's arm tighten around her.

"Darling, I've got a surprise for you."

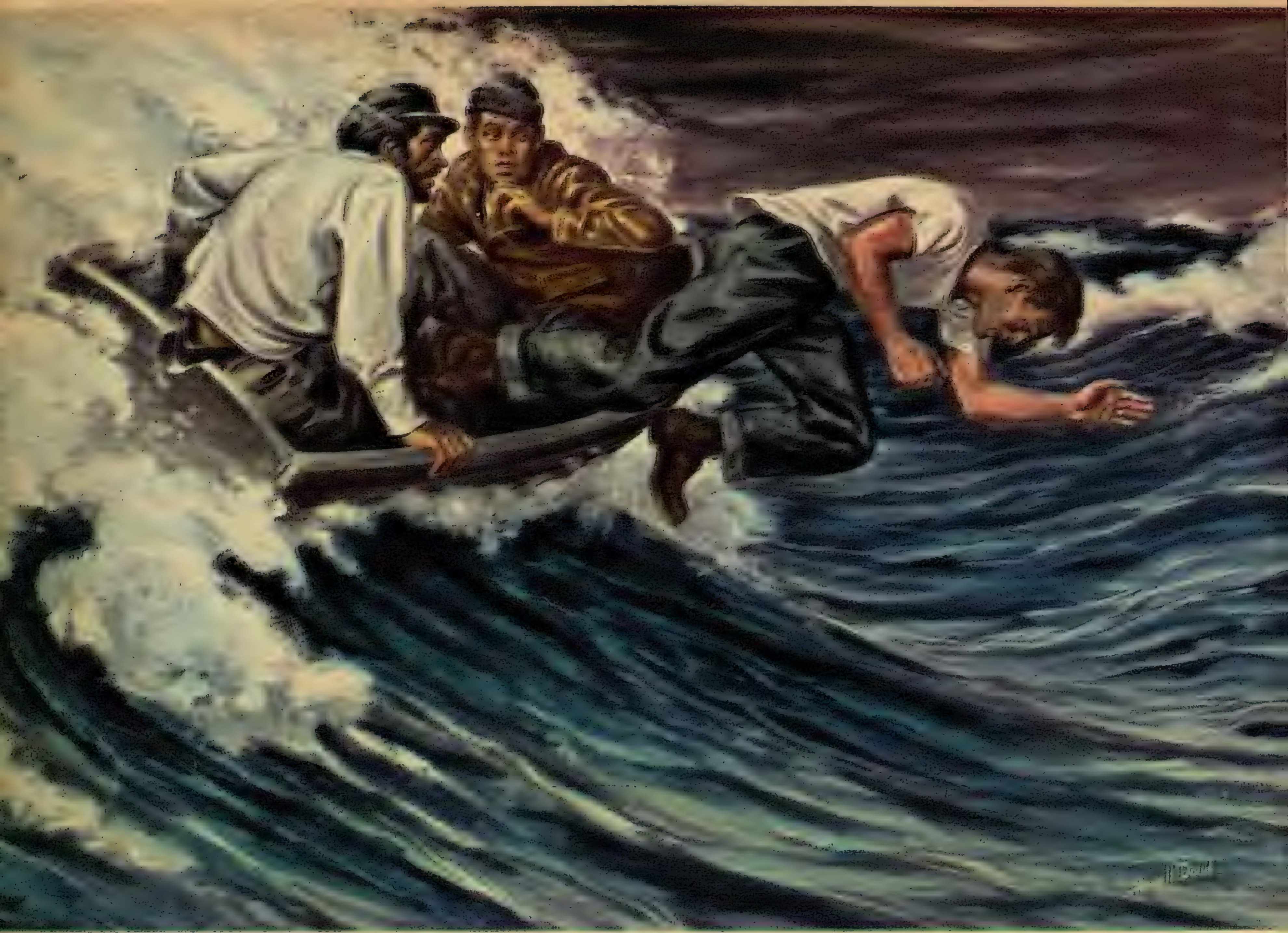
"A surprise! What?"

"I'm not taking you home tonight. No good-bys tonight, darling; until dawn us do part."

She glanced up at him, faintly alarmed. "What do you mean?"

"Mother left this afternoon to visit my sister Margaret in Toledo. Margaret's going to have a baby. Mother was the one who cooked up the whole idea—about us, I mean. She

(*Continued on page 54*)



"My buddy taking one look at my hand shouted, 'Goodby!' and then over he went quicker than you could say macushla machree."

IT made a big story in the papers when the second report came out correcting the first one, which had said that all hands went down with the Dun Aengus when she sank somewhere off the Ivory Coast. There was one lone survivor, Conal O'Donohue.

While a tale of the sea like that naturally interested a lot of people, it interested us more because Conal came from our village, and we had not heard much of him for some time or, for that matter, of his brother on the Shannon Castle or his cousin on the Lady of Louth. And to whet our interest was the news of his coming back to testify before a marine board of inquiry in the capital. Then he was coming home for a rest.

We followed his testimony in the papers. The gist of it was that the freighter struck one of the loose floating mines laid down in the war, that Conal escaped with another man to endure nine days at sea without water, save for one small rainfall, when they were picked up by a passing vessel. They found Conal played out; the other man died later in ship's sick bay. The story added that "the witness was reticent, stubborn, and glum, and irked the board with his terse replies."

"Glum!" said Malachi Michael O'Hanrahan. "That's droll, when I knew him for a broth of a boy to be anything but that, liveliest lad in the barony. He's changed, and there's more than dull facts in it. We'll see when he comes home."

Glum was the word for him when he came, though he brightened a bit before the old familiar faces. But he shied from telling us anything more, saying it was all in the testimony. It was the same when he went with us to pay his respects to Malachi Michael; he even tried to turn the tables by asking our patriarch to tell a story of the saga days on grounds of his missing so many away.

"'Tis yourself used to say the best wine is the oldest and the best water the newest, and what's a story in today's papers but dead tomorrow when you'd be telling a tale lasting the ages with the great kings and the proud queens in it till all I heard on the alien shores wouldn't compare."

"I'll tell you some," said Malachi Michael, "maybe one of our sea sagas too, when our fathers roved the wine-dark ocean and tempted the main deep. Take Bacruin, one of our princes of the blood of the third century who gave up his life to save his men. Only we'd never know such tales, nor myself have delight in telling you, if the survivors hadn't told them to our scribes. An adventure untold is no story; 'tis dead without others to hear it. Will you be having a drink now of the good stuff, twelve-year-old?"

CONAL took a big swallow. "Be damned if 'tisn't better than all the stuff I belted down in the foreign places."

"Och, good it is that herodom still lives in the race," went on Malachi Michael, "the way a man would be coming home from death in the deep to the friends of his bosom to talk with them unbidden. 'Tis the story makes the music of a thing, and the tale's the tune. So fill your tumbler again and tell us a bit of it, and yourself the witful man, surely, to keep your head in a crisis."

"I always kept my head in a

SECRET of the DEEP

Liberty's
SHORT SHORT
STORY

Only Conal O'Donohue had survived the sinking of the Dun Aengus, and with him a secret only the deep sea could have kept

BY T. F. HEALY

ILLUSTRATED BY HOWELL DODD

crisis," said Conal, "when a man must think quick."

"You did surely, when she went down so quickly!"

"So quick no man had a chance, and the ship like a madhouse, but—well, now, no harm in my saying 'twas a bitter thing entirely."

"The mine must have blown—"

"Amidships it was, smashing the ship to smithereens, with men killed on deck and in bunks. Only I was aft, with the sea coming in and the gunnels awash, when I spied the wee boat, snapped from its lashings and asquirl in an eddy. Over and out I was for it, only another hand saw it too, and we got in, righted it, and made off as fast as we could from the suction."

"Nor wait to pick up anyone?" asked Malachi Michael.

"No. 'Twas the paint dinghy the bosun used for calking the ship, and 'twould hold but two, and that only on a quiet sea."

"What manner of man was the other?"

Conal frowned at a memory. "A foreigner and not one of our own kind at all; a skulking sort, no family or background; not popular with the crew, nor much of a seaman. Couldn't stand the thirst and took sick, but I let him be and had him pray with me till he went daft and raving."

"That was Christian, Conal," observed Malachi Michael, "to treat a foreigner or even an enemy as you would one of your own. Now, did anyone else try to get on?"

Conal scowled. " 'Tis the landsman you are surely," he gruffed, "and myself saying 'twas only a little bit of a shallow-draft paint dinghy, a shell of a boat would barely hold two, and three in it to be swamping us down to a death worse than drowning, for sharks came after us too. I saw four of them when we got away in a running sea. Only the waves began to curl on us, and if you don't believe me, that's why one of us had to jump— But God forgive me, what am I saying. . . ."

"A man jumped! Tell us now, Conal!"

"Well, since I put my foot in it, another man made it too, and 'twas three of us in it, even if I didn't tell the board. Didn't even want to mention the third man's name, lest his kin be hurted with extra worry and all, and the papers pestering them for more, and myself the cause of it all in a way. 'Twas the same in the end anyway, to have him go down with the ship, and you promise not to tell it."

"We promise. The sea has many secrets in its bosom. Now, what manner of man?"

"WELL, 'twas the way I met him in Durban on the east Afric coast and him drunk in a native bar; had jumped ship and, besides, had messed up everything so much he felt he was a failure and as lief be on the beach and go to hell entirely."

"The sea is a bad mistress for some wishful to follow the bright heel of glory. Did you do your good endeavors by him?"

"I did. We needed an extra hand, and I got him out of it and on the Dun Aengus, where we were buddies, as you'd say. So—"

"You said you were the cause of it, Conal. How?"

"In a way, for the waves began to curl and one night swamped us, and seeing another one coming a ways off, I said, 'One of us has to jump and damn quick.' 'We'll draw for it,' said the foreigner, invoking a code of the sea. I'd a jackknife in my blouse and I turned and cut three slivers of different lengths from the bow—and we then nigh sinking—holding the ends even out of my fist. 'Shortest draw jumps,' I said. And the foreigner nearest me took one and my buddy the second, and then we opened our palms and each saw what the other held, and the foreigner with a grin on him at having the longest.

"And then—well, if my buddy, taking one look at my hand, didn't shout, 'Good-by!' and then over he went, quicker than you could say macushla machree, just as the wave broke and damn near did for us anyway. 'Twas all so sudden and he was gone in no time, for the sharks were in it surely, only I didn't have time to think for managing the dinghy. I think right then I didn't have time to think of my buddy. So—"

"Well, your buddy lived up to the code of the sea and took his medicine like a man," said Malachi Michael.

" 'Twas an experience I'd not go through again," said Conal. "That's my story, and if you'll be telling us of Bacruin, who died to save—"

MALACHI MICHAEL took a long pull of his pipe. "I wonder now. Well, I first wanted to ask about your younger brother, Niall, and we not hearing of him for a while."

Conal paused in a stillness that was broken only by the clock's ticktocking. "Nor will you be hearing of him," he said slowly, "for Niall is dead."

"God rest him! And how did he die?"

"Well, since you ferreted everything else out of me, he was on the Dun Aengus, transferred-like from his own ship."

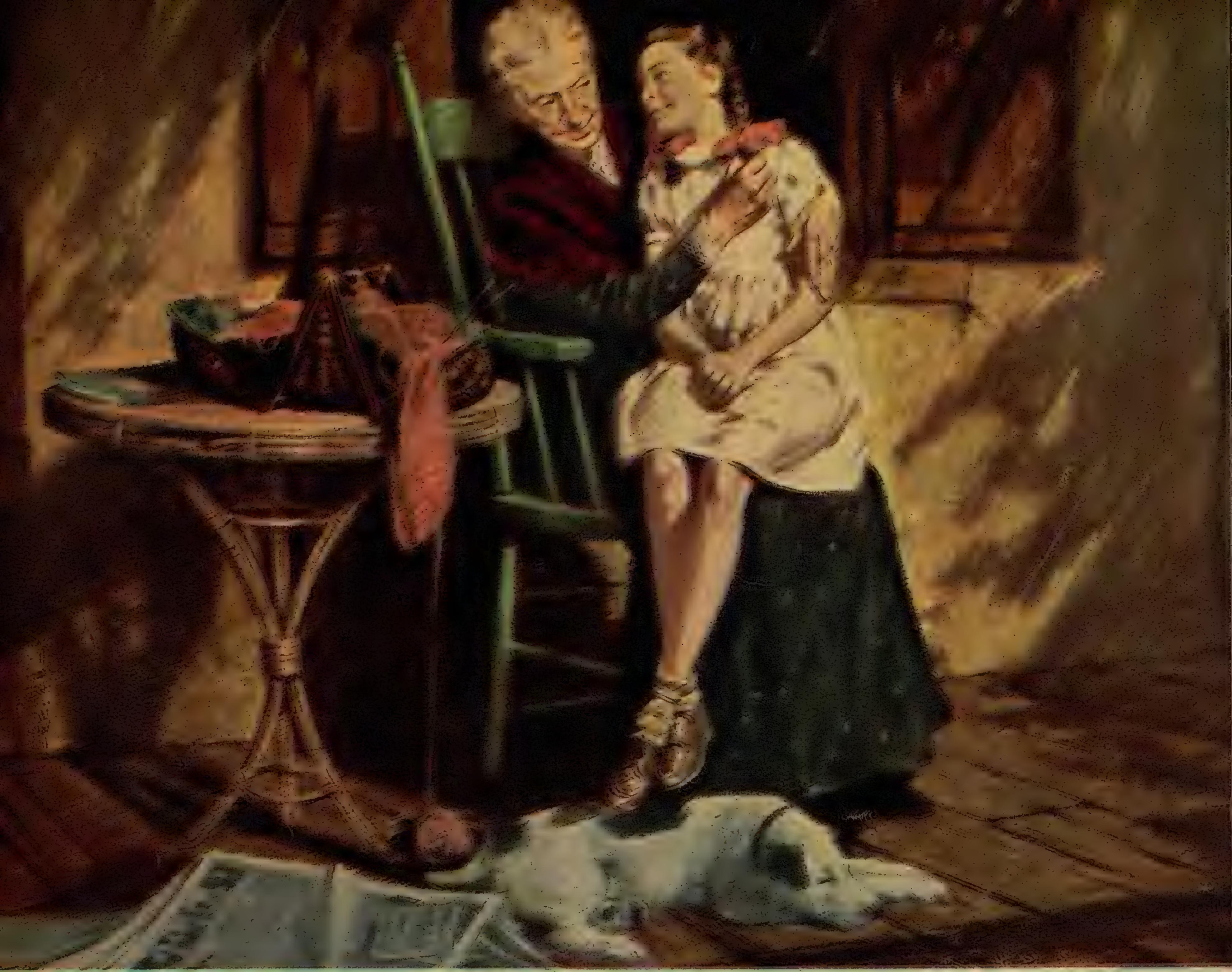
"And went down with it, poor lad!"

Conal looked at Malachi Michael. His lips trembled and the tumbler shook in his hand. "Malachi Michael," he said softly, "surely 'tis with the friends of my bosom I am this day, and I don't mind telling you now. 'Twas Niall I found in Durban, 'twas him on the dinghy with us, and 'twas him jumped into the sea."

"God rest his soul," said Malachi Michael. "Surely he was an O'Donohue and forged of the shield of honor, as great as any of our Irish heroes of old! Only he had to have the shortest draw, och!"

"No, Malachi Michael! Niall didn't draw it, and he knew it. 'Twas I drew that."

THE END



"Margaret," she said, "I'm never lonely. I never have been. I got used to being alone long ago."

Don't

BY SYDNEY R. McLEAN

ILLUSTRATED BY ERNEST CHIRIACKA

AUGUST of the year I was nine was to have been like all the other Augusts I had ever known. Always before, as long as I could remember, I had spent August with mother and dad on grandma's farm.

Grandma was my dad's mother, and pretty old, I guessed, because I knew that dad worried about her living on the farm alone, with only the hired man for company. All winter he would worry about her, and sometimes, when we three were in the upstairs sitting room after dinner, he would talk about it. Particularly when there was snow.

"I wonder if she's all right," he would say to mother. "I hope Russell keeps her warm enough—he's not very intelligent. I don't see why she won't come to live here. That farm's too big for her, even if it is out on shares to that man Watson. She's not as young as she was, and she's had a hard life. I'd like to give her a good time for a change." Then mother would say soothingly, "You do as much for her as she'll let you, Will. I don't believe she'd like it here in the city. She loves the farm." Then dad would go on, irritated because he was worried, "But you don't know what it's like out there in the winter, Clara. Why, when I was a boy—"

Then off he would be on the kind of reminiscences I loved, while I kept very silent in the corner with my book, listening hard and not missing a word. How the strong winds from the north blew the drifts against the house so he and my Uncle Tom had to dig a path from the door in the early morning, with Shep, the dog, barking in excitement beside them. How the cows would low in distress and hunger till the two boys reached the barn, and the hens and roosters would call out, and the sheep would cry and the cats

The poignant and lovely story of that which is the tenderest of all human relationships: between child and grandmother

Leave Me, Grandma

wail and the pigs grunt, and the whole big barn was an orchestrated cacophony.

I loved August better than any other month of the year, because I loved the farm. The old yellow sandstone house with the French roof was large and comfortable, with a low porch on three sides. The barn was full of delight and surprises for a little girl, like a nest of sudden kittens in the haymow and a calf nuzzling at its mother and baby chickens under a hen's wings.

Upstairs, on the floor where the threshing machine had stood long ago, was the two-seated sleigh, no longer used, which made a wonderful playhouse on rainy August afternoons. Sometimes I would sit on the front seat and pretend I was driving to church behind the two horses dad told me about; they were sleek and fast, and their names were Dasher and Prancer—Aunt Bride had named them. I would pretend that Shep, grandma's dog, raced along the road after us, and had to be sent home to guard the house. Shep had died long before I was born, and grandma had a little dog now, Spot, a fox terrier, elderly but still full of liveliness, unalterably attached to grandma. Spot's other special friend was Ned. Often, when we were there in August, he stayed the whole night in Ned's stall, sleeping contentedly at the horse's feet. Grandma said he never did that when she was alone, but in August he seemed to realize that he had shifted some of his responsibility to us.

SO this was the kind of August I expected the summer I was nine years old. I didn't like it at all when I was told that the pattern was to be disarranged. Dad had to take a business trip out West, and mother was going with him, and I was to go to the farm as usual. When mother and dad told me of the change, I knew that my love for the farm in August was bound up with my love for them, from whom I had never been separated, and I went off to my room and read the part in The Five Little Peppers and How They Grew about Polly's visit to the city without the others, and I cried, not knowing whether I was crying for me or for Polly.

Mother and dad took me up to the farm and stayed one night. I remember that night. We three sat out on the low front porch with grandma after supper. Russell went right to bed in his room on the third floor. Grandma's needles clicked at her knitting, for she could knit in the dark and she thought idleness a sin. I was on dad's lap, with my hand stretched out to hold mother's slim fingers as she sat in the chair beside dad, because I knew they were leaving in the morning and I could hardly bear the thought of it. Nobody was saying anything at all, just listening to the soft night sounds of the insects, and then dad spoke up suddenly.

"I wish you'd sell the farm, mother," he said. "You know how much Clara and Margaret and I want you in the city. Don't we, Puss?"

I raised my head from dad's shoulder and said drowsily, trying not to yawn, "Yes, we do, grandma. And Spot too."

SPOT, who was at grandma's feet, thumped his tail perfunctorily on the floor when he heard his name.

"That's very good of you, William," said grandma. I wish I could describe her voice. It was very low, yet every syllable was clear, and in her speech there clung a faint, elusive foreignness. Then she said, very low, "Spot belongs to the farm; so do I."

"But, mother—" Dad began.

Grandma interrupted. "I know, Will, I know. I'm not young any more. But this is my home, William; I'd feel lost anywhere else. Forty-five years next spring I've lived here. I'd be hard to transplant, William, pretty hard to transplant."

After that there was a long silence, then mother spoke. "Will doesn't like to think of you here in the winter, Mrs. Harding."

For a few minutes grandma didn't answer; then she said, "I have Russell, Clara."

"Russell!" Dad snorted.

"I know, William, I know. He's like a child in some ways; but he's good, and he loves the animals." She paused again. "And I have Spot."

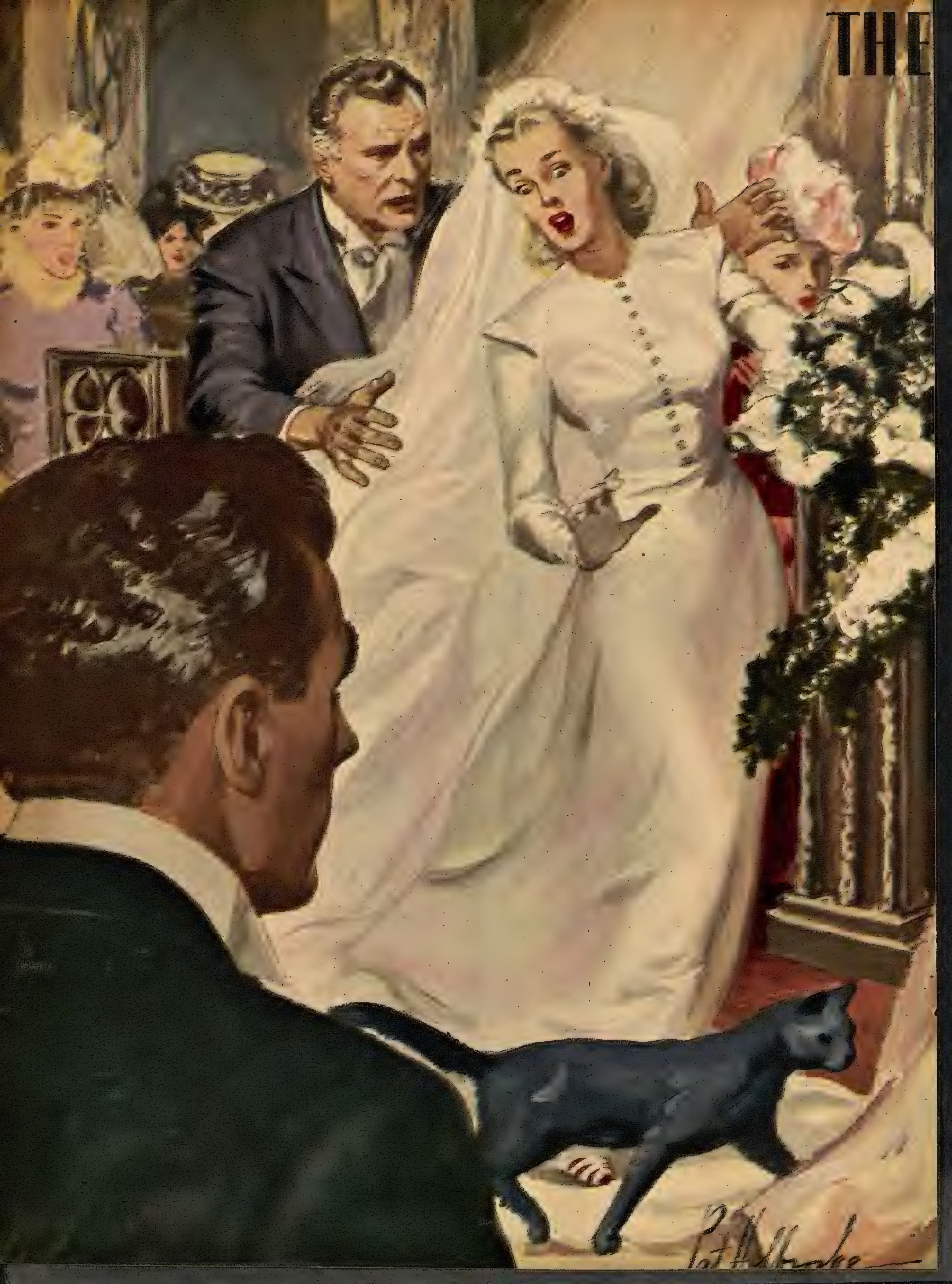
"A dog!"

"A dog," echoed grandma. Her knitting needles stopped clicking, and I knew, from the long sigh near her feet, that she had stooped down to rub Spot's ears. "Yes, a dog. A faithful dog. Getting a little old—like me."

I know now that she was indirectly

(*Continued on page 62*)

THE



CAT THAT WENT TO Church

ILLUSTRATED BY PAT HOLBROOKE

Eloise and Thad were all set to march down the aisle when this black cat showed up. And thereby hangs a furry—and very funny—tale!

BY ROBERT BURKHARDT

THAD'S teeth were chattering. His stomach was doing flip-flops. Three hundred and fifty pairs of eyes in fashionable St. Luke's were giving him the once-over to see what kind of goon Eloise Stanton was going to marry.

Why, Thad was thinking, did I ever let myself in for this show?

He didn't dare look at Bill Durley, his best man. He kept staring down the white runner that stretched to the door where Eloise would come in on the arm of her father.

So help me, we're *not* going to the Springs for our honeymoon. We're going to my cabin. I, Thaddeus Miller, am not going to be led around by the nose!

Then she came and the eyes turned from him.

The drums in his head speeded up their tempo and there was a panicky impulse to make a sprint for the side door.

One foot was edging toward freedom when he saw the cat. He liked cats, especially black ones, and this was the color of the inside of a stovepipe. It was walking sedately across the white runner in front of Eloise.

An ear-shattering shriek sounded through the church and Eloise collapsed in her father's arms. The wedding march ended in a clashing discord.

Thad, after one bewildered moment, turned, broke through the confused throng, and ran out the side door of the church.

"Saved by the bell," he murmured, and going to the place where his car was parked, sat on the running board.

There Bill Durley found him after a time with a bulletin hot from the front.

"It's hysterics!" he reported. "It seems Eloise loathes cats, especially black ones." Then he dashed off.

Thad was rising to his full six feet when he was conscious of something rubbing against his right pants leg. It was a cat, a big long-haired black cat, the very one he had seen in the church.

He reached down and scratched the animal's ears. The reward was a loud purr.

"Well, Mister Cat," he said, "you sure got me out of a tight spot, didn't you?"

He was stroking the heavy soft fur when Bill came back, this time with Mr. Stanton.

"Well, my boy," Mr. Stanton said, mopping his red face, "it's off for today. Eloise and her mother have gone home in the car, and I had the minister announce that the ceremony will be at our house tomorrow."

"And everything was going so well," Bill mourned.

"That's women for you." Stanton's tone was that of a man who had been bossed by women all his married life. "Hysterics over a little thing like a black cat." He turned and walked away.

"Guess we might as well go home," Bill remarked.

HE got under the wheel and Thad climbed in the other side, the cat in his arms.

"You're not going to take that alley cat home with you!" Bill stated.

"I'm certainly not going to leave him wandering around the streets. Besides, he's a high-bred Persian. He's no alley cat. I'll try to find his owner."

"What a guy!" Bill snorted in disgust, as he drove down the street. "You'd think he'd done you a favor by breaking up your wedding!"

"Maybe he did." Thad took the sprig of bouvardia from the lapel of his morning coat and tossed it into the street.

"What? Why, you're the luckiest guy in the world grabbing off a sweet girl like Eloise!" Bill was indignant. "I'd marry her in a minute if she'd have me."

Thad was silent during the rest of the drive to the apartment he shared with Bill.

"Aren't you coming in?" Bill asked, as Thad slid over under the wheel.

"Nope. I'm taking Jinx home—I found his name and address on a collar tag buried under his fur. His boss's name is A. Rhodes. See you later."

Jinx rumbled contentedly and closed his eyes.

The address on the collar turned out to be an apartment house. A freckled-faced kid, about eleven or twelve years old, was kicking a battered tin can on the sidewalk outside.

Thad got out of the car and took Jinx in his arms. The cat was wide awake now, and when he caught sight of the boy, his muscles tensed. The kid looked scared.

"Don't be afraid," Thad told him. "Jinx won't hurt you."

Apparently the boy didn't believe him, for he turned and ran down the street.

THAD found the name "A. Rhodes" on a second-floor apartment and pushed the bell. The door opened and a girl wearing a yellow sweater let out an excited whoop as Jinx sprang into her arms.

"Jinx! Jinx!" she cried. "You tramp! Where've you been?"

The cat hummed like an outboard motor as he rubbed his head against her neck and his forepaws started kneading biscuits on her chest.

"Ouch!" She dumped the cat on the floor and rubbed the sweater where his claws had scratched her. "Won't you come in, Mr.—er—"

"Miller. Thaddeus Miller, but I only answer to Thad."

"Something should be done about parents who tack names like that on helpless babies," she laughed. "I got stuck, too. My name's Abigail, but I'd sock anyone who called me anything but Abby."

He felt a pleasant glow steal over him. This gal seemed regular, and with a sense of humor, too. Now that he thought of it, he couldn't remember that Eloise had ever displayed that quality.

The black cat walked sedately across the runner, and the wedding march ended in a clashing discord.

He followed her into the living room and she scurried ahead, whisking a green suit from an easy chair. Clothes were piled on the davenport and other chairs.

"This place is a mess," she apologized. "But when you're getting married tomorrow, you can't spend much time on housekeeping."

"Married?" he asked.

"Sure. Why not? People do get married, you know. You read about it every day. This is my outfit." She held up the green suit. "How d'you like it?"

"Nice!"

"Richard was all for white satin and lace and a big church wedding, all the trimmings, but that sort of thing's not for me. More than ten people looking at me and my stomach starts doing nip-ups."

THAD sized her up as they stood there, talking away as though they'd known each other for years, and he couldn't help but contrast her with Eloise.

Eloise was beautiful, but on the languid pattern. Abby, on the other hand, was eager and vital, full of enthusiasm. She was small, only about five feet two. Her hair hung in a brown mass about her suntanned face. Her eyes were the color of a lake on a bright summer day, her nose was short and turned up a trifle at the end.

"Gosh, I'm glad you brought Jinx back," she was saying. "I've been half nuts looking for the rascal. He never ran away before. Where'd you find him?"

"Prancing down the aisle in front of the bride at a big wedding at St. Luke's," he said.

"Go on, you're kidding!" Abby was amused but skeptical.

"No fooling. You should have heard the bride yell when she spotted a big black cat crossing her path. It busted up the wedding."

Abby laughed until the tears ran down her cheeks.

"Of all the silly Sallies," she said, "letting a thing like that keep her from grabbing off a man! What happened to the groom?"

"Oh, he sneaked out the side door like he'd just been reprieved from the death cell."

"I'll bet she has a heck of a time getting him in front of a preacher again." Abby chuckled, as she stooped down and petted the cat.

"Imagine, Jinx," she said, "anybody thinking you're bad luck! You've always been good luck to me."

Abby beamed and then went to answer the doorbell. Jinx trailed after her.

A tall, blond, rather handsome man put one arm about Abby's shoulder and stooped and kissed her cheek. Jinx swelled up like a porcupine and spit at him.

"Stop that, you little brat!" Abby commanded, and Jinx turned and stalked back into the room, tail switching angrily.

"Richard, I want you to meet Mr. Miller—he found Jinx way across town and brought him home, and I've got the darndest story to tell you about what that cat did. Mr. Miller, this is Richard Grant, my fiancé."

The two men eyed each other coldly and nodded.

"Mr. Miller saw the tag on Jinx's collar—that's how he knew where he belonged. Aren't we lucky?"

"Oh, yes, of course," Grant answered, but Thad got the impression he could have weathered it if Jinx hadn't come home. He decided he didn't approve of Grant.

"Well, I'll be running along," he said, and started toward the door.

"Just a moment, Miller," Grant said, digging his wallet from his inside coat pocket. "You'll probably want a reward." Thad flushed.

Abby turned, a startled look on her face.

"I'm well repaid as it is," Thad said. "If I hadn't found Jinx I wouldn't have known Miss Rhodes."

"Well, thanks, anyway, old man." Grant restored the wallet to his pocket.

Thad felt like booting him where it would do the most good, but instead shook hands with Abby and left.

IT was after seven when he got back to his own place, and when he saw Stanton's car parked in front, he kept right on going. There was a good restaurant around the corner, and he treated himself to a big steak. His stomach was fine. It had been, ever since he left the church. Then he went in to see a movie.

It was almost midnight when he came home again. Stanton apparently had given up the vigil. His car was gone.

"You just missed Mr. Stanton," Bill told Thad. "He waited around hours for you. Where you been all this time—getting crocked?"

Thad hadn't had a drop, but it was as good an excuse as any.

"Hasn't a guy got a right to a few snorts after what happened to me?" he demanded.

"I talked to Mrs. Stanton on the phone," Bill continued. "She's swell. Taking it like a Trojan. Eloise has called several times, too. She's worried about you—better give her a jingle."

"Nix," Thad said. "I don't want to talk to anybody. I've got a splitting headache." Which was true.

"Better get to bed, then, and sleep it off," Bill advised. "Of course Mrs. Stanton and Eloise are disappointed about missing the church ceremony, but they've made other plans. The wedding will be tomorrow at their house at three o'clock."

Thad showered, shaved, and dressed early the next morning without disturbing Bill. His mind was all mixed up, and he had no idea what he was going to do, until the phone suddenly startled him into action.

He grabbed his hat then and left the apartment in a hurry.

The morning was bright and clear. He was striding along at a good pace when he saw a man unloading fish at a market. Without hesitation he turned inside.

"I'll have one of those nice fresh salmon steaks," he told the man behind the counter. It was cut and wrapped, when he said, "Better cut me two more while you're at it."

He left the shop, a young man with a purpose, and a few minutes later was in his car, headed across town.

Halfway up the stairs to Abby's apartment, he encountered the kid he had seen the day before. The youngster squinted at him curiously, and then recognized him.

"Oh, it's you again," he said. "Well, I can tell ya Mister Grant ain't goin' t'like this." He went on down the steps and Thad went up.

Abby came to the door in a robe, her hair done up in curlers. She seemed surprised but not displeased to see him.

"Oh, hello," she said. "I've only been up a little while." Her hand went to her hair.

"I know it's a heck of a time to bust in on you," Thad said, "but I saw some beautiful salmon in a market near my place and thought Jinx might enjoy it."

She didn't slam the door in his face and she didn't take the package and say, "Thanks, good-by." She invited him in and led the way to the kitchen.

Jinx got a whiff of the delectable smell and started miaowing.

"Why, you brought three steaks!" Abby exclaimed. "Jinx'll never be able to down that much, Mr. Miller."

"Thad," he reminded her. "I wasn't sure of his capacity—he's kind of a big cat, and—"

Abby laughed.

"I'll bet you haven't had breakfast either, Mr.—er—Thad."

He admitted that he hadn't.

"Wait till I get into some clothes and I'll see what I can do with a frying pan."

IT seemed almost no time at all before she was back, wearing a crisp gingham dress. The curlers were gone and her hair was in long deep waves all over her head.

She proved to be a highly efficient cook, and soon they were seated across from each other in the breakfast nook, digging into the salmon. There was a special plate on the floor for Jinx, who could hardly eat for purring.

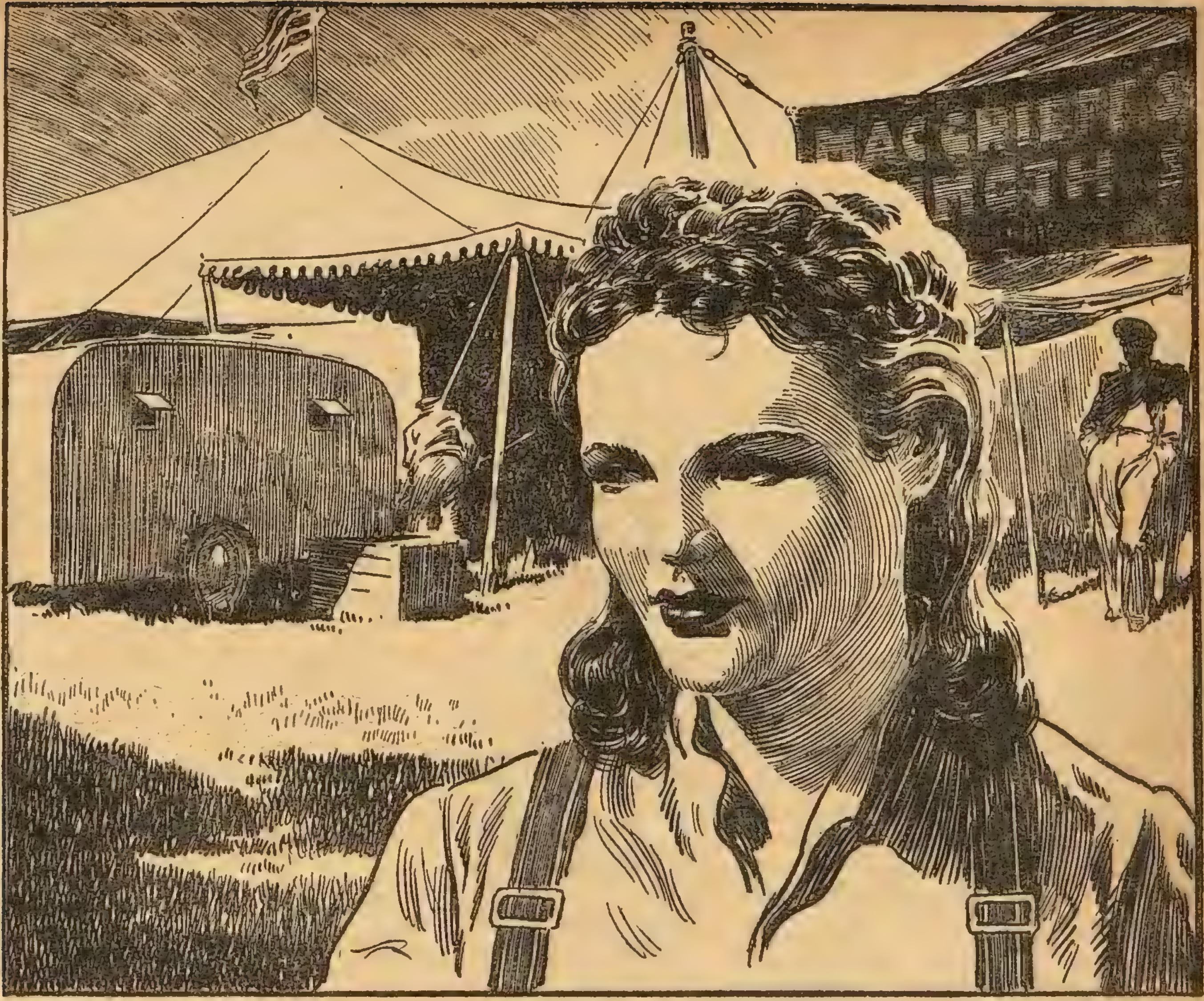
"Better slow down, old man," Thad told him, "or you'll blow a gasket."

"You've made a friend for life," Abby laughed. "Poor Jinx. I'm putting him in a cat boardinghouse this afternoon and he'll hate it. But there's nothing else to do—I can't very well take him on our honeymoon and we're going to be gone

(*Continued on page 74*)

Illustrated by
Frank Godwin

A
Liberty
BOOK
CONDENSATION
READING TIME
ONE EVENING



Don was broken in mind and Tex was broken in body. Then they joined MacGrieff's Mammoth Show and met Bathsheba, the World's Most Beautiful Victim of a Vindictive Villainous Madman. That was the beginning of a new life for both of them with the colorful people of Carnival Land.

Sheba on Trampled Grass

BY TOM POWERS

I NEVER saw either one of these two fellers, the young one or the old one, till that night in the Elite where I went to tend bar after I got mixed up some on a dream I had about the Derby and bet on the wrong horse.

There wasn't any business this night because something had happened at Fort Knox and there hadn't been a G.I. in the place for hours. There was just this old boy sitting there, until the young one came in and sat down and ordered him a beer just like the old one had in front of him.

That's when the old boy started talking.

"The goat," he says, looking up at a nice, hand-painted portrait of one to advertise Bock which don't happen in war time. "The goat is a great and a wise ruminant, with the eyes of a poet. But for an animal worth singing odes to, there's none like that animal for which this beautiful city is so highly famous."

The town we was in was Louisville, which, as everybody must know, is where Churchill Downs is situated and that's where the Derby happens and that's why I was working temporarily, waiting for my luck to change, which it was getting ready to do right that minute.

"Horses," the old boy opened up again, and that word, "Horses," pulled my ears around as if there was strings fixed onto both of them. "I start out in the spring," he says, "and I gallop 'em all summer long without giving 'em even a minute's rest."

I'm chicken hearted about horses, and for that matter, dogs, an elephant named Hortensia, a panther named Lilly that didn't know what modesty meant, and even a denatured skunk that a French lady owned. She was a contortionist, this lady, and she sure was talented, and she called her skunk Chanel Zero. So you see why, when this

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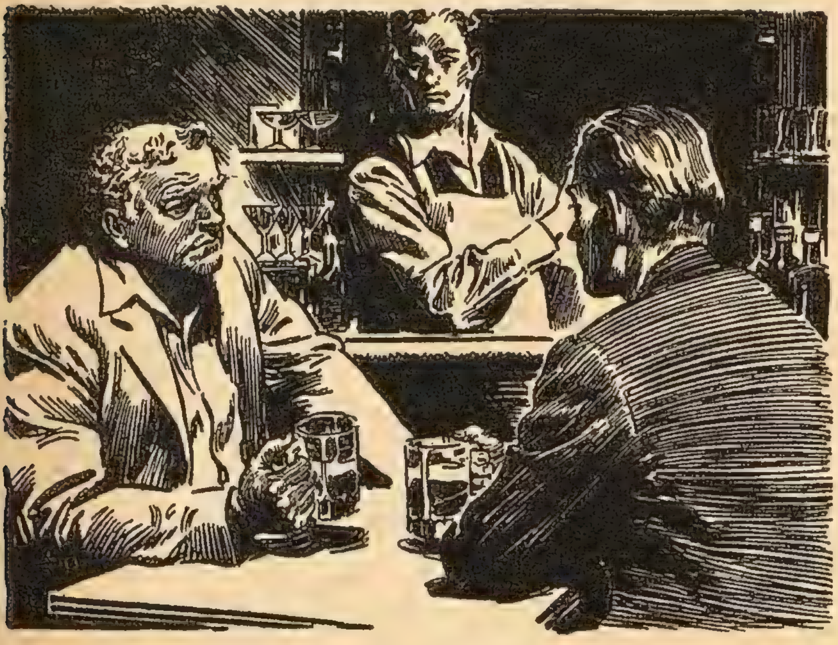
old boy talked like that to this kid about not giving his horses a minute's rest all summer, I was listening hard.

I couldn't figure out the old guy. His hair was white as cotton with a pink scalp showing through, as clean as a white rabbit's skin. He had on foreign looking clothes but he was as Irish-American as pie a la mode. He had blue eyes that looked at you so straight you wished you'd lived a better life, but his smile would of forgiven you, even if you had been a lot worse than you had been.

The young feller had a hat like a Tyrolean hat, up in the back and down in the front, that I tried on once at a place called Locarno, but, even in the hat, my yodeling was terrible. He was about twenty-five, and well built but on the skinny side. His face was kind of pale and yet tanned. When he grinned it was a kind of tired grin. He had brown hair, cut short, and his clothes was from a good tailor that charges dough. And how suits can be so different, all just made out of cloth and cut out with scissors and sewed with thread, I don't know.

He had a look about him that you couldn't miss, city bred, college bred, money, folks, but not stuck up about any of it. He looked so unconscious of himself and was polite to the old man without even knowing he was being polite. Coming over to the old feller's table, after he got interested about the horses.



Well, it's funny. There I leaned, polishing a polished glass and listening to this old feller talking to this young feller, and never dreaming that there goes my life, starting from this minute to give me what I never had and never hoped to have and sure don't deserve and wouldn't of ever had, maybe, if I hadn't of stopped to listen to this old man telling this young gentleman that he never rested his horses all summer long. And he didn't, as I found out the next day and all the days I spent with these two and with Tommie and Tatters and that damned panther.

And Bathsheba too, though of course I didn't see Her, not till the next day, or was it the day after? The reason I can't remember so exactly is that my life got divided when I did, into before I did and after I did. She was like that. To me anyway she was.

She wasn't really like anybody you or I or anybody else ever saw before, on earth or in Heaven, unless they've got little gal angels up there with eyes that look at you like through green sea water and shoulders the color of a meerschaum pipe that I was just getting to color good when me and some other riders got drove out of Germany at the start of this war because we was Americans and didn't have any culture, much.

But this gal I'm writing about with the meerschaum shoulders, she walked like seaweed swaying in a gentle current. She spoke kind of hoarse and soft and deep and not flirtatious and not wondering what you were thinking of her, because she never thought what she herself was like at all and I guess she didn't think people even noticed her. Anyway, that's what it seemed like when she stood there, like she had to, with everybody looking at her, day after day and night after night, and her with less and less on, as time went on, to cover her up from all of their eyes that wouldn't have looked away from where she was standing if a bazooka had of gone off right behind their left ear. Till the end, when she didn't have hardly anything on at all.

Oh hell, you can see this book is going to be all about Her. How could it help it? So beautiful she was, Bathsheba.

"Do you mean to say these horses of yours are just arriving in Louisville today?" the young feller asked.

"At dawn this very morning," the old man told him, "my horses were moving towards this city, quietly approaching it over the chocolate waters of the Ohio, One of the By Goddest muddiest streams that ever, overnight, left a sandbar in midcurrent to impede the progress of a ramshackle steamboat."

"You mean you ship them by water, then?" The young man was sure interested now.

"I do," the old boy said. "It's cheaper, if a bit slower. It's smoother travel."

"I should like to see your horses," the young one said.

"I want you to see them."

"Why?"

"Because I think you will appreciate them, which proves almost exactly what I think of you."

"Thank you, sir." The young feller spoke with a serious look on his pale face. "But I must tell you that if you think I'm a horseman or an expert you're mistaken."

"I'm not mistaken. You will appreciate my horses."

"When may I start appreciating them?"

"Tomorrow morning," the old one said. "On what, in the songs, they call the Levee."

Now, it seemed like they had gotten to be lifelong friends. The old one asked, "Where did you come from, and how did you come, and why at this very minute to this very place?"

"I'll tell you," the young man said. "I am a product of respectability crossed with a very strong scalawag strain. I'm the product of an education for peace forced to try its wings in a world bristling with bayonets. I'm this generation, if you want to generalize, and believe me I'm gladder than I can tell to meet you, who are a part of every generation from Voltaire to Fred Allen, and if we two don't ask this bartender to draw us another beer apiece to pledge this friendship we're a couple of palewits."

"Two beers," I said and started around the bar. But the young feller brought me the empty seidels.

I always begin to bristle if anybody seems to take it for granted I'm not able to even walk over and clear off a table. "This is a bar," I says, "not a cafeteria."

"What's your name?" he says to me.

"Tex," I says, scraping the heads off of the beers. "They named me Tex because I was born in Oklahoma."

"How long have you been tending bar, Tex?"

"Since I was three years old," I says. "My mamma used to hold me up so's I could reach." I can't stand to be asked questions, not since I've been like I am.

"Well," he says, "to get those callouses on your hands, you must have had to handle a lot more bar towels than most of these sheep herders you find pushing liquids across shiny mahogany. You've rung up more drinks than the average white-fingered tenderfoot would ever be able to bulldog and corral." And he walked off with the two beers.

WHEN they finished their beers and got up, I started around the bar, but the young one brought the mugs and put 'em down with a dollar.

"Thanks," he says and, when I started for change, "keep it."

The old man put his old hat on at an angle that horsemen all over the world use without even knowing it.

"I'll pay for my beer," he says. "Otherwise I'm just a bum you've met, talking for drinks." And he put a dollar on the bar.

"Then you'd better take his money," the young one says to me. "I don't want anything to spoil the first happy moment I've found in a very, very long time."

I gave them both their change and each one put a quarter on the bar.

"No, thanks," I says. "Otherwise, I'm just any Bohunk barman listening because it's a barman's job to listen to guys that want to talk, and you two wouldn't know that it's been a pretty damn happy minute for me too," and I pushed back their quarters.

"Do you like horses?" says the old one, knowing what I meant and pocketing his.

"I do," I says, "and it's what you'd call mutual."

"Be at the Levee at the foot of Fourth Street at seven sharp, tomorrow morning," he says.

"Me too?" the young one asked.

"You too," says the old feller.

Just then Kurweiss, the proprietor of the place, came in and eased up behind me. "You can't go," he says to me. "Dese soldiers, dey get off after be in camp all today. Dey come in by tousands. We start clean up early."

"I'll be there," I says to the old man.

I DIDN'T see a horse on the Levee or any sign that one had been there. But there was a pile of boxes, maybe twenty or thirty, about six by four by five. They was made out of oak and bound with iron and had big flat locks, and on each one was painted in a neat sign, UNC BEVINS. I leaned my left shoulder and hip against one of them like I've learned to do to rest them, and waited. I lit a cigarette and threw the match down and stepped on it, like you better do, if you know what's good for you, places I've lived.

Somebody started talking from the top of that pile of boxes, and over the edge came a puff of smoke and then a Tyrolean hat and under it that young feller with the tired grin.

"I'm glad to see you observed the Scout rules," he says, but like he wanted to be friendly. "I'd hate to see Louisville burn down around us and me without even a harmonica."

And just then there was the old boy coming towards us, walking like General Eisenhower on an early morning parade.

"The air of the Ohio greets me," he was saying, "like nectar of coal smoke and attar of catfish."

"Hi," says the young feller, climbing down off of his perch, "did you have any doubt that your two acolytes would get here for Early Mass?"

"Not the slightest," says the old boy.

"I shouldn't be surprised," says the young feller, "if Tex is blessed by being minus a job."

"A job," says the old boy, "to a man like Tex is but a temporary concession to necessity. If he had let himself be bullied out of coming to see my horses, I'd have gone all day without a bubble of beer to punish myself for complete failure as a judge of my fellow man."

"Thanks," I says.

"No, thank *you,*" he says. "I need you, Tex. I'm just starting out with my horses. I'm getting old as all the world can see. My temper is uncertain. But my horses are fine and young and beautiful and I need your help to keep them in shape."

"But I got to tell you—I can't ride," I says.

"It's not a rider I want, Tex, it's a helper, a sympathetic kindhearted man that can understand me and my horses. Each one is a personality. Marijuana now is a light headed bay gelding. Black Maria is a sleek black Kentucky-purebred with a heart of gold, Mrs. Dionne a fine dependable brood mare, Bobby Sox and Frankie a matched pair of sorrels that need watching, and Casanova a dappled stallion that knows his business and minds it too. Oh yes, I can get riders by the hundreds, thoughtless gay young riders. But what I need, Tex, is you. And you too, my lad, but only for the pleasure of seeing your sad young face light up when first you view them in action. What's your name?" He looked at the young feller hard.

"Don Paddock." The young feller grinned at him. "And since we're doing a round of introductions, what's yours, and where the hell can we see your horses?"

"My name?" says the old boy. "Do but turn around, my lad. For there it is, spelled out before you thirty-six times, lately inscribed by the best union sign painter that New Orleans affords. My name, gentlemen, is Unc Bevins."

Don took a look at the big enormous pile of boxes. "You travel heavy, and porters so hard to get," he says. "Have the horses come ashore yet?"

"They have." Unc Bevins took a bunch of keys out of his pocket and fitted one into the lock on one of the big chests. When the whole side creaked down on hinges, the old boy tore off a horse blanket with the name on it and there was the dappled stallion, Casanova, not like any other Merry-Go-Round horse this side of Heaven. As each lock came undone and each door fell down, grey and black and piebald and sorrel, those little horses come out of their blankets, each one what they call a masterpiece of wood carving and of painting too.

Don looked with a serious face at Unc. "Who made 'em?"

"Myself and another feller," Unc says. "An Eyetalian painter that had made a fortune painting mighty expensive portraits of race and show horses, till he had accumulated a nation-wide reputation and a taste for one of the chief products of this beautiful state, to wit, Bourbon.

"When his hand shook so that he couldn't paint, and his eye bleared so he couldn't mix colors, I met him. I kept him sober on rum till my horses were all finished and we'd made a box stall for each of 'em to travel in."

We locked the stalls, as he called the boxes, and Don helped and we all felt good together. We was just starting over towards the Coffeepot for breakfast when a guy spoke up from behind a corner of the boxes and we turned around.

HE was as slick as any eel; slicker, and in one minute I sure hated what guts he had which a blind kitten could see was pretty scarce.

"Want to see you, Unc, private," he says.

"This," says Unc, "is my assistant trainer, Tex, and this is Mr. Don Paddock from up East, an old old friend of mine, so shoot."

"Do they know this game?"

"Sure, Skeet, they know it backwards, and we all know what you got corns on your mean little backsides, riding down here from the show grounds to ask me. You want to borrow five bucks. Well, here it is. And with it this advice—don't try to sell any reefers to soldiers in this town. Uncle Sam can't get you locked up if he don't know it, but I do and I will."

Skeet grinned and shot a look at each one of us hoping we'd grin too, but we didn't. He took the fiver, looking more sneaky than ever. Nobody said anything and it looked like he couldn't just walk away. So he says, "I've got to get a new clown for the ballyhoo."

I saw Unc's eye light up and shift to Don and back to Skeet. "What happened to your clown Toby?" he says.

"Went patriotic on me and got drafted."

"What did he do in your show?" Don asked.

"Just clown stuff," Skeet says, "on the pitch out front, mostly dancing a little to the Wurlitzer to get the rubes gathered around, so Tommie could come out and give 'em a gander at the cat."

Unc's eye was watching Don, hard.

"This wizened gent's exhibit," he says, "is varied. Tommie shows 'em Hortensia, the elephant. Then the Major, Mata Bala, who is four feet high, a scholar, a philosopher and a linguist. Then Tommie battles with Lilly, a big panther, as ferocious as Tommie is amiable. Then this gentleman, if I may use the phrase, leaves off whatever petty illegal practice he may have been engineering among the pockets of the shifting thoughtless pleasure seekers, hurries into the tent in time to take credit for the cleverness of Tatters, a dog to move a heart of stone. So you see, the job left vacant by Toby is light work and somewhat pleasant."

"Let's eat," says Don, and we four went and did.

As we was sitting in the Coffeepot, I saw a truck drive up alongside of the boxes and the biggest black man got out of it I most ever saw. He started looking around for somebody. Then he reached up and patted something in the seat of the truck. Like a streak of lightning, what he had patted shot through the air onto the ground. It stopped still, looking at the man, and shook itself like a mop out of an upstairs window.

I guessed the man was Tommie and I was right. He said something to the little dog and it bounced around a time or two and sniffed the ground. Then it made a bee line for where we was sitting.

"That, I take it," Don says, "is none other than Tatters." While he was saying it, he got up and opened the door.

Tatters shot into the doorway and stopped. He looked us over and counted to see how many and what we was doing, and as soon as he knew, he turned around and lit out, back to tell Tommie, and told him.

Tommie came back with him. He looked and walked like a Royal Zulu chief I broke two Arab horses for once, and the chief offered me a pretty present to pay me, but I was traveling light at the time and had to leave her behind.

Tommie talked like a bass anthem singer in our choir back home. He started telling Mr. Unc, as he called him, that he had the stuff set up at the Carnival grounds. Skeet asked if Tommie knew who he could get to take the clown's place. Tommie said he didn't know nobody. He began to load the boxes in the truck.

"What did you pay the clown?" Don asked Skeet.

"Fifteen bucks a week and his keep. Why?"

"Twenty," says Unc.

"Cripes, you know everything." Skeet spit out his little teeny wet cigarette butt.

"I'll take the twenty," Don says.

THE first sight Don and me had of "MacGrieff's Carnival of Side Shows" was riding in that truck with Tommie. It looked pretty much like any other Carnival getting set up, I guess.

On one side, as we turned in off of the street and drove over the trampled grass, was a wooden thing like a silo and a sign, "The Human Rocket." On the other side there was a space where a pretty big tired looking elephant waved its trunk at us. Next was a little tent with wash flapping on a line strung between it and a trailer setting out back. A big sign out front said "Princess Bessie, Wise Woman." She was Tommie's wife, Unc told us. And there she sat in a clean white apron, shelling peas and bowing her head to us as we drove past. Kind of dignified she looked, and why not? Believe me, that sign wasn't telling no lie.

Next came a round little dark blue tent with a kind of homemade old sign, "The Girl in the Moon," and there an old thin looking lady, as neat as somebody's grandma, was holding stakes while an old gentleman in a black suit with a string necktie drove them in. Papa and Mama Warburton, Unc called them.

And then I saw it—a black tent, and across the front of it a big poster sign. Where everything else on the show grounds was bright colors this poster was all in black and white and it give you a kind of a chill.

"MacGrieff's Mammoth Show," it said, and then, "Bathsheba, the World's Most Beautiful Victim of a Vindictive Villainous Madman."

There was a platform at the entrance to the tent and, high up over it, a kid in overalls and a big tall long-legged man in a red shirt was hugging onto the poles with their legs and pulling ropes through pulleys lashing the big poster in place. The man had a scowling, pale face with a blue chin and he never give us the high-ball, like most of them did as we passed. The kid went on tying the ropes like he didn't see us at all.

"That's Black MacGrieff that owns the Carnival," says Unc, not looking up at him.

"Bathsheba," I says, "who's she?"

"She's a lady in the Bible," Don says.

"No kidding, Don," I says. "Don't take advantage of my poor ignorance."

We got out by the circular track and the engine that ran Unc's exhibit.

"What about this Bathsheba show?" I asked, as Tommie set the boxes down and Unc opened them up and I begun taking the blankets off and folding them, like I'd worked there all my life.

"It's a girl," says Unc, "and a villain. You saw him when we drove in, and her too. That was Sheba in overalls up there helping MacGrieff rig the banner up."

After Unc showed me my bunk, set up in the Show Ring tent in back of the organ, Don and me went over to watch Tommie put up Skeet's tent. Don started to help, but Tommie stopped him. "Mr. Don, I ain't gonna let you do no hard work. No sir, cause Princess tell me not to, just now. Princess say you ain't so well, Mr. Don."

"How could she know?" Don says.

"Don't ask me, Mr. Don. Princess is a mighty wise woman, just like what it say on de sign on our tent. She say you and Tex is all right, but Tex mustn't do no heavy work on count of his back, and you mustn't do nothing but take dis year key and open up dat trunk and git de clown suits out and bring 'em to her right quick, so she can bile 'em in de kittle she got waiting for 'em."

He gave Don the key, and then he went over to Miss Hortensia and asked her to please come help him draw the main pole up, and she come and done it like a bulldozer. Miss Hortensia loved Tommie so much she couldn't hardly keep her trunk off of him.

Don picked out the two clown suits with big red and black dots on 'em and ruffles and I was going to walk over with him to meet Princess Bessie when MacGrieff walked up, quiet, and stopped and stood, looking at us.

"I always tell new guys with this outfit to keep the hell away from my pitch, see?" he says finally. "And that goes for you two, you get me?"

"You've made yourself very plain, Mr. MacGrieff," says Don. "Tex and I will accept any invitation we get without keeping a time open to drop in on you for any home cooked hospitality."

MacGrieff's little eyes got even littler. "Don't get smart, see? And don't you let me catch you, either one of you, getting smart around my place, you understand?"

"I do," says Don, "and I'll do my best not to let you catch me. If I were you, Mr. MacGrieff," Don says, "I'd quit reading that banner on the front of your tent. You'll get to believe it." And we went on over towards the little fortune telling tent, with that funny little dog Tatters galloping over the weeds and never letting his nose get six inches away from the heels of Don's handmade brogues.

PRINCESS BESSIE rose up from poking the fire under her black pot, and Don says "Hello, I'm Don Paddock, this is Tex, and we know who you are. Tommie said you'd wash these. It's very kind of you."

"It's not a mite of trouble," the Princess says and plopped them in the pot and shook powdered soap on them. And then she looked between us to behind us, and her face got soft and tender. We both turned, and there she was, Bathsheba.

She wasn't tall. She wasn't fat. She wasn't skinny. She had on a blue jeans boy's shirt and overalls, and she didn't stand with one knee broke and that foot resting on the toe like most women do in pants. She stood on her two feet with her arms hanging down and her chin up and looked beween us at the Princess.

And me thinking, That's her and she's everything on God's green earth but what I thought she was going to be. Her hair is brown and combed neat with a plat around her head. Her eyes are blue, no, they're green, or maybe a little grey, or all three. Her skin is soft and not white, but her lips are red, and they're not painted red. There was something about the way her head set on her neck that made you think of a bird. I can't describe how she looked at the Princess, not smiling but friendly, not sad but thinking. Well, I guess you know by now that she sure was kind of interesting to me.

"I got everything all ready for you," the Princess says, and climbed the steps into the back of the trailer.

Don took off his hat. "My name is Don Paddock," he says. "And this is Tex." I guess he guessed I wasn't agoing to be a damn bit of use, so he went right ahead. "Princess Bessie is kind enough to say that she'll wash out these clown suits for me. I'm going to be greatly overpaid for trying to be funny in them."

"What are *you* going to do?" she asked me.

My tongue took a little tugging but I got it loose from the roof of my mouth. "I'm going to help Unc Bevins."

"He's my friend," she says and turned and took the bundle from the Princess. "Thank you, Bessie."

"Not at all," says the Princess. "Them little shoulder ribbons that keeps the show dress on, they shore do get ripped off. Looks like lately I got to sew 'em back on most every day."

"I don't suppose," says Don when Sheba started to walk off, "that you'd let one of us carry that for you."

"No, thank you," she says, "I don't think you had better."

We looked back at the Princess and she looked at us.

"Her father, he don't like her to mix," she says.

Sheba turned her head once and looked up at a window, high up in the back of Skeet's trailer. I looked too. A face was looking out. It was like a monkey's face, but more like a Chinaman's face, but not nearly big enough. It was the size of a child's face, but it had the lines of a man's face and it had the expression of a man's face, watching Bathsheba walking towards her tent. That was the first time I had seen the little Major, Mata Bala, but I knew right away it was him.

BY the second night, when the lights went on and the crowds began to gather, Tatters had gotten so he just wouldn't leave Don at all. He run around him on the platform and jumped through his arms and sat up on his shoulder. It looked like Tatters knew all the tricks and all Don had to do was to relax and let Tatters teach them to him.

Next to the last night before the week was up, about ten-thirty Unc said his horses looked tired of going around and around with what he called Unappreciative Yokels on their pretty backs, so he closed up. I thought he looked pretty old and tuckered himself. I didn't like to ask him if he was all right, but I did walk with him to his trailer like I was just finishing what I had to say. We said goodnight, and I strolled over to where Don was gathering the crowd for Skeet's last showing.

Well, I was standing in the crowd when I heard somebody talking right behind me. It was a lady with wavy gray hair but a mighty sweet pretty kind of face. She was plain dressed but rich.

"Of course it is," she was saying. "I couldn't possibly be mistaken. Look at his hands."

There was an Army officer with her, a medical officer, a Colonel with a weathered face and outdoor wrinkles across his neck.

"Do you want me to do anything?" the Colonel says, quiet, close to her ear.

"Buy two tickets from that colored man and take me in to see this show."

He did, and I followed right behind them. Tommie wouldn't take my money but eased me on in, too. Inside the tent I kept close to them but they didn't talk any more, just watched the show like the rest of us.

Tommie looked even bigger in his green uniform and Miss Hortensia, the elephant, was smart. She pretended she was drunk with a stovepipe hat and a wooden bottle. Then Tommie fought with the panther named Lilly that gave the best imitation you ever saw of a panther named Lilly that wanted more than anything else in this world to eat Tommie right up. But he won and threw her back in the cage and she laid there grinning and planning to win, someday. She sure looked mean.

And then there was the Major and he was about as big as a boy five years old, and I recognized him right away, even from the glimpse I had gotten of him at the trailer window. His voice was soft and mighty educated. He talked to us about coming from Thibet and, to show us how educated he was, he wrote on a blackboard in five languages. After that he started selling his pictures.

Now there was a kind of pause and I heard the lady's voice, "Look at him, Clem. Where in the world do you suppose he got that wonderful dog?" And I looked, and there was Don standing out of the way over by the entrance with Tatters.

Then Skeet made a speech like he was in Madison Square Garden and the loud speaker was busted. "Ladees and Genteelmun, my little dog Tatters will now entertain you, if you'll step over here, by diving from the top of this here ladder that rises thirty feet up into the sky. And, at the moment of this daring Leap of Death, my assistant Tommie, the big boy, and me will catch the dog in this here blanket."

Tommie stood there like a chocolate statue holding the red velvet blanket with ragged gold fringe. Don was standing over by the entrance. Tatters stood behind him and peeped around the floppy ruffles of Don's pant leg.

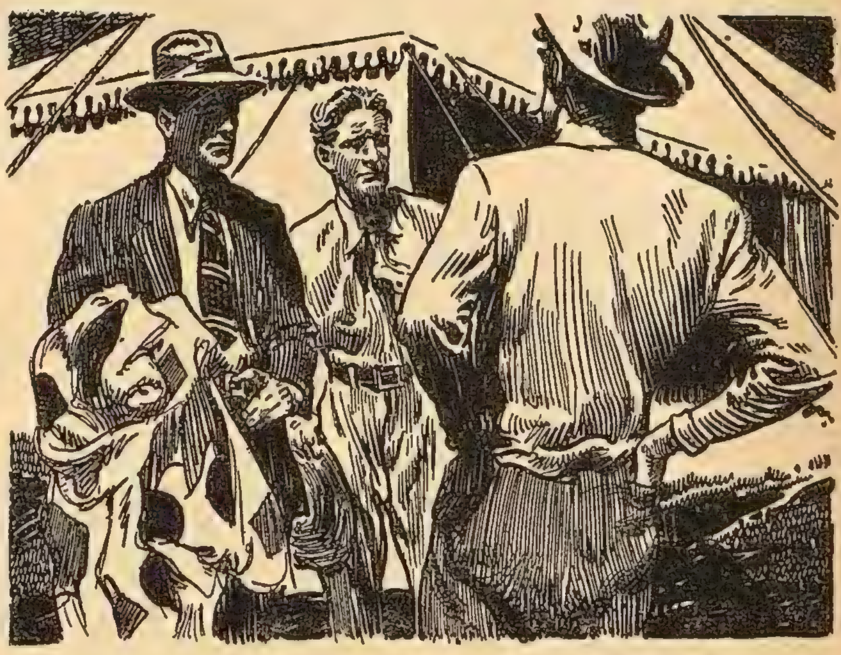
Skeet struck a pose and give a command, "Come, Tatters." Tatters stayed where he was at. Skeet called it again. "Come Tatters." Tatters never budged.

Skeet begun to get a little pink around the ears. Everybody got quiet, watching.

Don stepped aside and said, "Go on, boy." Tatters started towards the ladder out in the ring, looked back to see if Don wasn't coming too, saw he wasn't meaning to and sat down.

Don walked over to where Skeet was waiting, and Tatters followed him.

Skeet looked pretty relieved and made a little more speech about how he trained the dog to do this wonderful feat. Tatters was listening to the speech, so while he wasn't looking, Don tried to sneak out of the ring. Tatters followed him out.



Skeet begun to get temperish and yelled, "Come here, you—" (something under his breath).

Don stopped, and Tatters got behind him and peeked out between his baggy legs.

The people started to laugh, and you couldn't blame them. Don stepped back to the ladder and he says, "Tatters." The dog jumped up in the air and turned a nice, neat back flip. The people yelled.

Now Skeet sort of took up another notch and started again! "Now then, me and my helper here will catch the dog in the blanket . . . now get up that ladder, get up, before I—" and he made a grab for him, but Tatters jumped sideways just out of his reach and looked at him and sneezed. By this time Skeet was awful red. He turns to Don and says, quiet, "Tell him to go up, for cripes sake."

So Don did, and Skeet says, quiet, out of the corner of his mouth, "I'd get rid of that damned dog if I didn't have to use him in the show."

I was close enough to hear Don's answer. "You can do both," he says. "Sell him to me. I'll work him for you in the show for the rest of the season."

"You're crazy," Skeet says. "That dog's worth a hundred bucks."

"I'll give you a hundred and a quarter," says Don.

"Where the hell'd you get a hundred and a quarter?"

By this time Tatters got up to the little platform away up there in the light above the tent, and Skeet opened up his barking voice again. "Watch it now, folks. Here it comes, the last and greatest feat in our show. Come on now, Tatters. Come on, jump, boy."

Tatters laid down on the little platform and put his nose between his paws. Skeet called to him. He yelled at him. Tatters never even noticed. Everyone begun to kid the devil out of Skeet.

"Hundred and a quarter. Is he mine?" says Don.

"You haven't got it." Their voices was getting loud.

"If I can get it, is the dog mine?" says Don again.

"You'll work him the rest of the season?"

"Right," says Don. "A deal?"

"Tell him to jump," Skeet says.

"Tatters," says Don. Skeet and Tommie held the blanket. Don held out his arms.

"Come on, boy," Don says, and you could have heard a feather drop.

Tatters jumped.

I saw, almost before he took off, that he was going to miss the blanket, and he did. But he landed right where he meant to be, smack in Don's arms so hard it knocked Don right over backwards. But you can bet he never let go of Tatters.

Before I knew it I yelled, "Attaboy, Don!"

Then I heard that lady's quiet voice right in my ear, saying, "Are you a friend of his?"

"Yes, ma'am." And I took my hat off.

She opened up her ladies' hand bag that was made out of the skin of a lizard, a real one. After living places I've lived, I know.

"Give him this," she says, and put what she had took out of the bag in my hand. "And please don't tell him where it came from. It's just that I love dogs, and he might not have the money to pay that man for it."

"I see, ma'am," I says. "Do you like clowns too?" And I looked right into her clear gray eyes.

"Yes," she says, "I like *this* clown, more than you would believe. What's your name?"

"Tex," I says. "I work for the Show Ring. It's a kind of high school Merry-Go-Round. Maybe you saw it."

"Yes, I did. It's beautiful," she says. "Thank you."

"Thank you, ma'am," I says. "But say, how do you know I won't go out and spend this crackling stuff just on myself, maybe?"

"I know you won't." And, boy, she give me a look that was like getting a medal of honor.

"You don't want him to know you saw him in the show," I says.

"No, please," she says, and then, "How is he, Tex?"

"He's just fine, ma'am," I says. "Don't you worry yourself none."

"I won't," she says and she went on away.

I WAS hanging around, waiting, while Don took off his paint and clown suit in the closed-in truck where he slept at. It was pretty dark around there because most of the lights was getting put out as the crowd melted away off the grounds. Out back of Princess Bessie's trailer there was still the red glow of her fire.

Pretty soon, quick and quiet, around the tent I was setting in the dark shadow of, I saw Skeet walking past his own trailer and over towards Princess Bessie's. He stopped by the fire. I could see him against the glow. He threw something into it and there was a shower of sparks as he stomped on it a couple of times. Then he come back, running soft. He went into his own trailer and shut the door, and the light went on.

When Don come out of his truck we walked along in back of the tents going towards the saloon for a beer. As we passed the fire, I saw something in it, nearly burnt up but not quite. It was an empty lady's hand bag made out of real lizard's skin.

MacGrieff's trailer was dark. We passed close to it, both of us for some reason walking careful and soft and not saying anything.

"Where's your new dog?" I says, when we were on our second beer.

"I left him with Tommie," Don says. He looked mighty pale. "I've got a couple of things to see to in town."

"Listen, Don," I says, "I got something I want to give you that may save you a trip," and I put the bills in his hand.

"What in hell is this for?" he says, different from what he had ever spoke before, and his hand was trembling.

"I thought it might save you a trip to town," I says, "and besides, the pawn shops wouldn't likely be open now."

"Where'd you get it?" he says.

"From a book maker," I lied. "I got lucky today."

"What was the name of the horse?" he says.

I can lie so easy to anybody I don't like. But there I sat and couldn't say a damned word. Don looked at me for a long minute. Then he got up, put four bits on the bar, then he leans over and hits my shoulder kind of a soft blow with his fist and turns on his heel and walks out of the place.

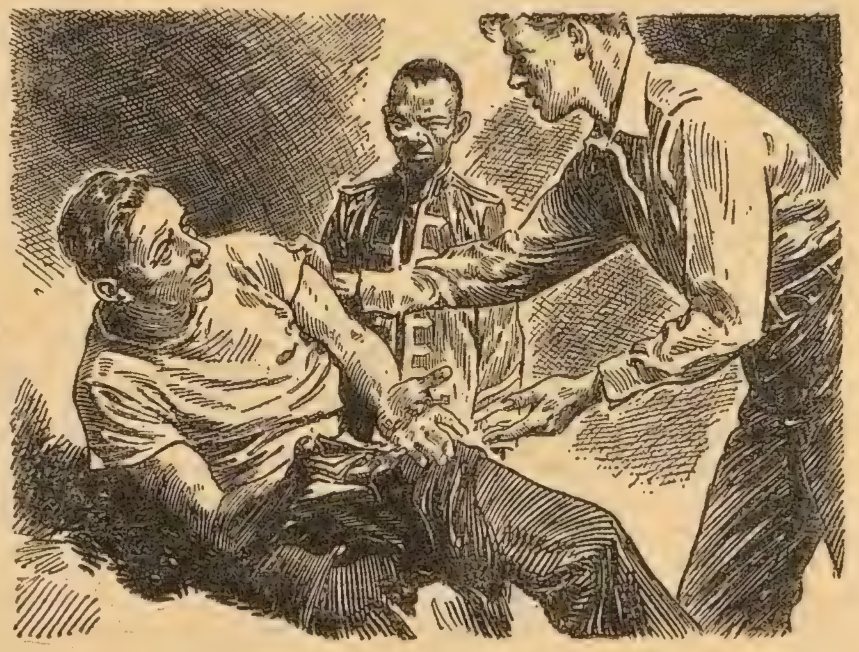
As I walked back by myself, the moon had come out and lit everything up in black and white. I walked by the old people's tent and then I heard something that stopped me in my tracks.

Somebody in MacGrieff's trailer was sobbing. Not loud, it wasn't, but steady and low. I couldn't stand it. I wanted to get away from hearing it. So I stepped high, back through the weeds, and that's how I tripped over something soft. I pretty near fell down and I sure wrenched hell out of my back. As soon as I could catch my balance I looked close. It was the Major.

He just laid there like some little animal that's been kicked and looked up at me. I took him by the arm and lifted him up onto his feet. Why, hell, he didn't weigh no more than a pint of oats. I wasn't used to walking with midgets and I didn't know how you act with them, so I took holt of his strong wrinkled little hand and he come along as gentle as a child's pony, and that's how we come up to the side of the trailer where he lived at. He stopped under the dark window, and I let go of his hand and there we stood.

He took in a deep breath, for him, and he says, "When you tell this, people will laugh at me, but I will not care. You will see. I am strong. I am a man, some day everyone will know it."

Before I could of answered, if I could of answered, I smelt cigarette smoke and I looked up and there was Skeet's necktie hanging out the window over my head and Skeet's neck in it and Skeet's face up above it.



"You two going steady?" he says and he laughed and leaned a little further out of the window. When he got where I could reach his four in hand necktie, I jerked him out of the window. It took him a minute, laying on his back on the ground at our feet to get back the breath I'd knocked out of him.

"Git up!" I says, and he got up. "Git in your wagon," I says, "and don't gimme no talk and do what I tell you in a hurry."

When we got inside I thought he might grab something, so before he could, I grabbed him. "Skeet," I says, "you better gimme what you took out of that lady's purse, because I'm telling you if you don't—" and I give him one quick short hard jab in the belly.

Well, he give me twenty-five bucks and a bunch of keys and a little silver backed tortoise shell comb and he said that was all. And I guess it must of been all, because I took aholt of his soft ear and twisted it like I meant to wrench it right off for a souvenir, and still he said that was all, so I guess it was.

The Major just stood there watching and nodding his head like some little Chinese statue. Then I put out my hand to him. We shook, neither one of us saying a word, but I knew he knew I wasn't going to tell anybody about finding him where I knew he must of spent I wondered how many nights listening to that poor girl sobbing.

WELL, the next day, being Saturday, was our busiest day and the last day before we moved the whole shebang across the river to show there. The Princess fed us chicken gravy on wheatcakes for breakfast. Don and Tatters went off somewhere, but I hung around and smoked for a while.

When the Princess finished washing the dishes, she fetched out an orange colored dress with spangles. There was ribbon strings here and there to tie it in some places but a lot of them seemed like they was tore right off. She took her sewing basket and begun tacking more little ribbons on. The skirt was stuck onto the body part with little snappers like and they had to be tightened onto it, so she had quite a lot to do.

Pretty soon I thought I better get on back over to the Show Ring to get the carriages dusted and rub down my horses a little. Unc liked them kept nice, and by now it seemed like whatever I could do to make that old man happy was pretty important not to leave undone. So I said goodbye to the Princess and turned around to leave her, and there *she* was standing behind me as still as a birch tree—Bathsheba.

I thought she looked a little pale and her blue green eyes seemed bigger and prettier and sadder than ever. And I couldn't tell whether it was a shadow on the right side of her slim smooth neck, or whether it might be a bruise.

"I'll have your dress done in a minute, honey," the Princess says. "I just got to go inside for one more snap, and it be done." And she got up and went into the trailer, and I could have kissed her.

"How long have you and Don known each other?" Sheba asked me.

"One week," I says like a dumb kid in school answering questions.

"He likes you," she says.

"I like him, too," I says, "only— I didn't know you knew each other."

"I try not to know anybody," she says. "That first day you two came I tried to tell you honestly so you would understand that I can't be friends with people. You knew what I meant and I haven't seen you since, and I was grateful to you, but Don didn't seem to notice what I said. He's not used to show people. I guess that's why he just treated me like he would treat any other girl."

The Princess came back with a pile of clothes and the orange spangled dress folded up on top. "Maybe you better carry 'em for Miss Sheba," she says and handed the pile to me.

"Thank you," the girl says to her, and I knew it was all right for me to carry them for her.

As we stepped over the ropes of the tent I took a quick look up at that high little window in the end of Skeet's trailer. There, holding onto one of the bars, was that wrinkled little hand, and I knew she knew it was there.

"My father had to go to town," she says, "so we won't give our show till he gets back, about dark."

I was dumb as a fish, but she talked along as easy as if we was brother and sister and that didn't please me much either, I can tell you. At the big black trailer she stopped and held out her hands. "Thank you, Tex," she says and took the bundle.

"You're welcome," I says and then I couldn't stop myself. "Listen," I heard myself saying. "You was crying. Please don't let anybody make you cry like that. Please don't."

"Thank you, Tex," she says, though what for, I sure hadn't no kind of an idea, and she smiled, slow and sweet, and she turned around and went up into the black trailer and shut the door.

Going back I noticed that the side canvas of Skeet's show tent was reefed up where Tommie was sitting on a box with his back to me. Then I saw what was in his lap. It was Lilly's slick old black head with its yeller eyes half asleep like a old black tabby cat. I saw the collar around her neck and the chain that was snapped onto a bar of her cage, but even then it took me a minute to persuade my feet not to run like a jack rabbit.

"I thought she was mean," was all I could say.

"She ain't mean," says Tommie. "She jest act mean for the customers. She get lonesome, so I has to set down with her now and then and pet her some. You scratch her under her jaws with a stick, you see how mean Lilly is. Go ahead and try it. She's tame." And I did. That was the damnedest panther you ever saw. It was love at first sight, I guess. I kept on scratching her neck and got her to getting crazy about me, which maybe if I hadn't of, maybe she wouldn't of, but I did, and I guess that's why she did like she did.

Well, that day business was so good we couldn't knock off for supper. Unc and I just stopped the Show Ring going around for long enough to set down in one of the carriages and eat a sandwich.

While we was doing it, Unc said, "Sheba came to see me today."

I stopped chewing with my mouth full.

"Her ma was a nice woman, so I hear from the Warburtons," he says. They was the old couple with the blue tent. "She died when Sheba was fourteen and the next year Sheba came along and did the show with MacGrieff. He's a whip and knife artist." I could feel Unc's eye on me but I wasn't going to let on. I give him a cigarette like he liked me to roll for him.

"In all the time I've known Sheba," he went on, puffing away, "this is the first time I ever knew her to show any interest in anybody."

"I only carried her laundry for her," I began, but he kept ahead like I hadn't said anything.

"Be that as it is," he says, "she seems to have been looking at one young man. It worries me, thinking what could happen."

"Will we be packed up in time for me to see their late show tonight?" I asked him, when we got up.

"Yes," he says. "Take Don with you, and keep your eye on him. It's a pretty disturbing exhibition of skill, that show, and it's put on in a way so that it might make him do something we'd both wish he hadn't."

"Don?" I asked.

"Don," he said. "She's been seeing a lot of Don. That's what I was talking about, my lad."

AS a showman, Black MacGrieff sure knew his stuff. The tent was painted blue inside with a soft blue light that you couldn't tell where it came from. It made you pretty near tiptoe on the trampled grass till you found a seat.

MacGrieff walked onto a stage that was hung around with blue velvet curtains. He faced us and stood there for quite a while, thinking, then he turned and went through the curtains. A flute started playing by itself, I guess it was a record, but it sure didn't sound like it. Now there came, slow, a little glow of warm light, like firelight, maybe, on the blue curtains, and they turned kind of purple and moved a little.

My eyes caught something moving, too, over at my left and I looked. Two Marines was setting together way over at the side, and all of a sudden between their two faces another little tan face was rising up from behind them. It was the Major. Don didn't see him, and I didn't say anything. The curtains started to open, slow.

She had on something made out of stuff just like the curtains, I guess. Anyway it made her arms and most of her disappear entirely against the velvet. All you could see was her face and her slim neck and her naked shoulders. Her chin was tilted up so you could see a pulse in her throat. Her hair was up on top of her head in little curls, so her ears showed like ivory. I've seen gals all my life in exhibits, smirking at the boys, or looking haughty or cute or like that. Bathsheba simply looked up a little over their heads, as if she was watching a sunset.

MacGrieff came through the curtains at the side with his whip in one hand and the big, long knife in the other. He walked across the stage so his black shadow passed over her face and neck and shoulders. She didn't seem to see him.

On the other side of the stage was a velvet covered table with seven knives, just exactly like the one he carried, laid out on it in a neat row. He put the eighth knife down with the other seven. He took off his hat and stood with the whip in his hand, looking at her as if he could eat her up. There was nothing fatherly in that look.

The next instant the whip whistled and popped, time after time, all over the stage like a machine gun going off. I could feel Don tense up like a steel spring alongside of me.

Now MacGrieff drew the whip back slow, taking a careful bead on her from fifteen feet away. His arm shot out and jerked back. The lash caught the drapery where it was fastened between her firm little breasts. It fell away onto the floor. And Bathsheba stood there in the long skirted, orange spangled dress. With the least movement of her breathing a million little lightning bugs of light flew all around her.

The flute tune went on, and she begun a slow walk, all around the stage. A good collected walk is the prettiest gait a show horse has got, and, looking at her, I thought, "Best in class. Best in show."

When she got back to where she had started from, she stopped and took her stance and waited. He raised the whip and there wasn't a man in that tent took a breath.

The spangled dress was low-necked, but it had a kind of a little cape that covered up pretty near all of her arms. The hand holding the whip flashed out and back. The whip curled and a wave shot along it, till the rawhide snapped like a rifle on her shoulder and ripped open a trick knot that held the little cape there. The cape slid off at that shoulder, leaving it bare.

The whip popped again at the other shoulder. This time it missed and tore a little scrap from the orange spangled cape. The scrap flew around through the air, stuck onto the lash. MacGrieff had to gather the long whip up in his hands to pick it loose. He threw the scrap off to the side of the stage and started again, looking meaner than ever. This time with one flip he whipped loose the knot. With a whispering sound, the cape slid off and left her arms and shoulders bare.

Next the skirt of the dress broke apart at the waist where the Princess had been repairing those snappers. The whip kept popping, each time undoing another snap, till the whole bottom part of the dress slid off onto the floor and left her hips in short black lace pants.

One more time the whip cracked right between her breasts and the body part of the dress was undone one snap at a time and fell off, until she stood there in a little short black lace thing to match the pants and a pair of shiny black slippers. All the time it just seemed like she didn't know it was happening, or that anybody was looking at her.

THE flute went right on playing. MacGrieff walked around her now, dragging his whip on the floor. As he took aholt of the curtain cord behind her, he turned his head and looked at her, slow, from her slim ankles on up. It was the dirtiest kind of a look.

He pulled the cord, and the curtains opened and we saw a heavy piece of wood like a door behind her, and all over it was gashes and big splinters gouged out.

MacGrieff walked around behind her, still looking at her. And then he reached his long thin hand out like he was going to touch her breast. She took two steps backward, away from him, till her bare shoulders rested against that wood. He turned and went near the table where the knives was, and begun spinning the whip like a rope artist spins a rope. It was a good trick I never saw before. The circle the whip made stayed up above his head as big as a hogshead hoop.

With his left hand he picked up a knife by its handle. Now he turned the circle he was making with the whip so it was up sideways on his right side, and he threw the knife up in the air, pretty high, and picked up another one off of the table. With the same hand he threw that knife up, and, by the time the first one come down, he had three of those big knives, keeping them in the air juggling them with his left hand while the whip kept on going around and around in a big circle.

All of a sudden it popped twice, yanking off the lace pants and the little lace shirt. The whip handle hit the floor and all eight of the knives was in the air over his head for a second, and then, one by one, with the force of a bullet, they shot through the air, right at Bathsheba, and with a loud thud they stuck deep into that board, one on each side of her throat, two between her elbows and her waist, all around her, all of the knives trembling in the wood and none of them more than three inches from her. Almost before the last knife had hit and struck, he jumped over and pulled the cord and the velvet curtains come together in front of her and the show was over.

I looked over as the two Marines got up. There was only their two heads, and nobody was behind them.

IT looked like Don and I couldn't say anything as we moved out of that tent and headed over towards the saloon. We was passing the Warburtons' trailer when somebody spoke from the dark window. It was the old gentleman and his voice sounded mighty shaky.

"Do you know anything about First Aid?"

"Everything," Don says.

"Splendid." The old man sure sounded relieved. "A friend of ours has just met with an accident. I'll let you in." He pulled the heavy curtain over the window, and we went to the steps at the back and crowded in. We stood still while he lighted the lamp.

The Major was laying on the floor of the trailer with his head in the old lady's lap, towels and sheets around her covered with his blood. His little coat was on a stool with the sleeve all bloody where a long gash was in his right arm. The cut was deep and above the elbow and was already bleeding him to a pale tan.

Don was on his knees in a minute, tearing strips off a sheet. He tied one around above the cut and reached back onto the little supper table for a case knife that he used to twist the strip, to make it stop the blood.

"Now, Tex," he says, "if you'll just hold that tight little fist and brace this elbow I—think—we'll—this is going to hurt you, Mata Bala, my lad, and I think you'd better send forth a magic message to tell all the Llamas from the Gobi Desert to Llassa to concentrate on sending you waves of strength to help you to act like the—brave—and—forceful—man—that—at this moment, I know—you—want to—be."

It was over. The blood had stopped. We all relaxed. The Major opened his eyes. Two big tears ran down his cheeks. Slowly the tight lines in his face relaxed too, and, slowly, the hand that I was holding relaxed. I put my other hand over it quick, so Don wouldn't see what was resting in that sweating little palm. For it was a scrap of cloth, like a little scrap of orange flame.

The door behind us opened and shut, and there was Bathsheba. Overalls, hair platted around her head and blue green eyes wide and red mouth open in her pale face.

"I came as soon as I could get away." Her husky voice went through us like a current. She kneeled with us on the floor. She took the Major's face in her hands. "I'm so sorry," she whispered.

"He'll be all right, Sheba," says Don. "But we didn't get that artery pinched a minute too soon, did we, Tex?"

For the first time she looked at me and her eyes said, "Thank you." But I wasn't going to let Don give me anything.

"I never had a thing to do with it. Don here did it, like the head of the Red Cross." I was trying to sneak the piece of spangled cloth out of that little hand. But the Major held on, tight.

Now she sat back on her heels and let go of a long deep sigh. "After the show," she says, "I was getting dressed. My father started pulling the eight knives out of the wood. I saw him stop still with one knife in his hand. I looked where he was looking, and there, coming through the curtain at the side of the stage, was the Major's little arm. His hand was reaching for something on the floor and, as he picked it up, I saw the knife go, and—and—I knew it had hit—and I—"

As the first sob started in her I held out my arms to her. I held my breath as she spun around and threw both of her arms around Don's neck and sobbed on his chest.

I watched him pat her shoulder and at the same time motion with his head for the Warburtons to pick the

Major up and put him on the bunk. So damn cool he was. I wanted to shake him by the throat till it rattled like a rock in a can. It seemed like I just couldn't hardly stand to see her soft body shaking and sobbing against his body like that, and him as cool as a referee.

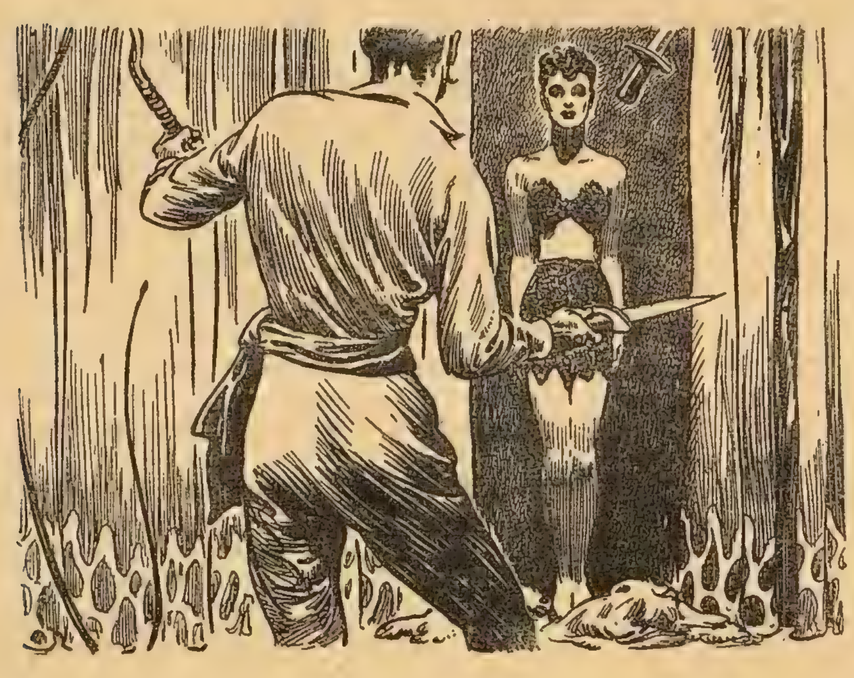
That's when the knock come on the door. Bathsheba threw her head up like a deer that hears a hunter. Then her hand went over and turned the lamp down, and she leaned over and blew it out. We all stood still in the dark, as she opened the door. She spoke back over her shoulder as she edged out.

"Goodnight, Mamma Warb," she says, "and thank you ever so much for sending him off to the hospital. I think you did just exactly what was best." The door shut behind her.

"Who took him?" MacGrieff's voice asked.

"Mamma Warb says Tex took him away in a taxi," she lied to him.

"Sneaking little bastard," he says, and as they moved on away, "If he tries to start anything about this I'll break every chicken bone in his lousy little Chink body."



Well, when it got safe to do it, Don carried the little man out and we really did put him in a taxi. At the infirmary Don's blood wasn't the type, so they let me give him a pint of good old Oklahoma. While they was squirting it in him, Don and me sat there in a little room like Mr. Dionne waiting for the arrival of that formation of storks and tried our damnedest to keep from looking at each other.

"I felt like a sneak and a dope and a cowardly jackass," I says finally. "All of us huddled in that trailer in the dark like skeered rabbits, while she went out to meet that guy, all alone, by herself. Why the hell," I says, "couldn't you have gone out with her?"

"She didn't seem," says Don, as calm as if he was giving an interview, "to want him to know that anybody was in there. Of course, you could have gone out and said, 'Look, Mister, I've been right in there, in that little place with your daughter in the pitch dark, with nobody around but four witnesses. Do you want any better proof, sir, that everything's all right?' It would have defeated what the poor girl was trying to achieve, but it would have been a very manly gesture."

"Look out now, Don," I says. "This is nothing that you and me can make jokes about."

"There's nothing," says Don, "that can't be joked about between two good friends, Tex." And his brown eyes looked right straight into mine. "As long as neither one of those friends is trying to keep anything away from the other one or to take anything away from him, either."

"Dammit," I says, "she's crazy about you, and everybody but me has known it for I don't know how long, and you know it too."

"She's never taken the trouble to mention it to me." He was taking it as if it didn't mean a thing to him. And then he says, "Here's your hundred and fifty," and he counted it out.

I didn't feel like asking how he'd saved it in one week on twenty bucks a week and he didn't explain. I couldn't tell him who it did rightfully belong to, so I took it.

When they got through stitching my blood up inside of the Major so it couldn't leak out, we put the little feller in another taxi and took him across the bridge to Indiana and found the new Carnival grounds.

Tommie and the rest had driven their trucks with the trailers across the wide river. They all wanted to know how was the Major.

We put the little feller to bed in my bunk and I went on over to help Tommie get Lilly quiet. And she purred and rubbed her ears against me and looked like she couldn't get enough petting from old me, that sure knew by then that I couldn't make everybody feel about me like what Lilly did, and so I stayed there listening to Lilly purr, and, man, it was sure soothing to my lonesome spirit.

THE next day was Sunday, and in the afternoon I stopped by the Warburtons' tent.

"Hello, son," the old lady says. "Papa and I were just saying we get so damned tired of eating at home. Let's all go, dutch, over to Louisville on the street car and have a real honest to God hotel dinner."

So I sat and talked to Mr. Warburton while she was getting ready, and pretty soon MacGrieff came stepping over ropes and stakes towards the trailer. He knocked on the door and Mrs. Warburton opened it.

"I've got to go to Jeffersonville," he says. He didn't see the old man and me. "The damned Ration Board is threatening to raise a stink about our getting tires and gas and this is the only night I can see a man Skeet knows that can maybe fix it. I'll be out late," he went on. "Sheba's acting ornery again. I can't find that damned Bessie, so I want you not to take your eye off of Sheba till I get back."

"Has she had any supper?" Mrs. Warburton says.

"No," he grunted, "maybe you can get her to eat."

"I'll see she gets something," the old lady says. "I'll come right over with you now." And followed him.

Pretty quick she come back, and Sheba with her. Sheba had on a dress that was black and short and snug around the girth with wide shoulders, making her neck look even longer. She had the plats around her head and short gloves, leaving her pretty arms bare all the way up to the short sleeves.

In the street car the Warburtons wanted to sit together and they sure didn't get any opposition from me. Sheba didn't wear perfumery but she had a clean, washed-baby kind of a smell that sure was nice. I didn't know, till I sat by her, how little she was.

We got to the Brown Hotel and it was pretty snazzie. We got a table for four and spread our napkins on our laps and took a sip of water and it was sure pleasant. I began telling a yarn, and Bathsheba's laugh rippled out, pretty and clear and loud. Heads turned around. And over her shoulder I saw a face that I knew. He was in uniform, sitting by himself at a side table for two, the Colonel that had been with the lady that give me the money out of the lizardskin bag. He didn't let on, and neither did I, but he borrowed the waiter's pencil and started writing something down.

Just as the waiter put the ice cream with chocolate sauce in front of us, I saw Don, making for the chair on the other side of the small table. Bathsheba saw my face, I guess. Anyway she looked around and saw Don just as he shook hands with the Colonel and sat down. She turned back, and for the first time I saw two spots of color come into her cheeks.

When we started out of the dining room, Don saw us. We had to pass close to the table so he got up and the Colonel did likewise.

"Hello, Mamma Warb," Don says, and introduced us all.

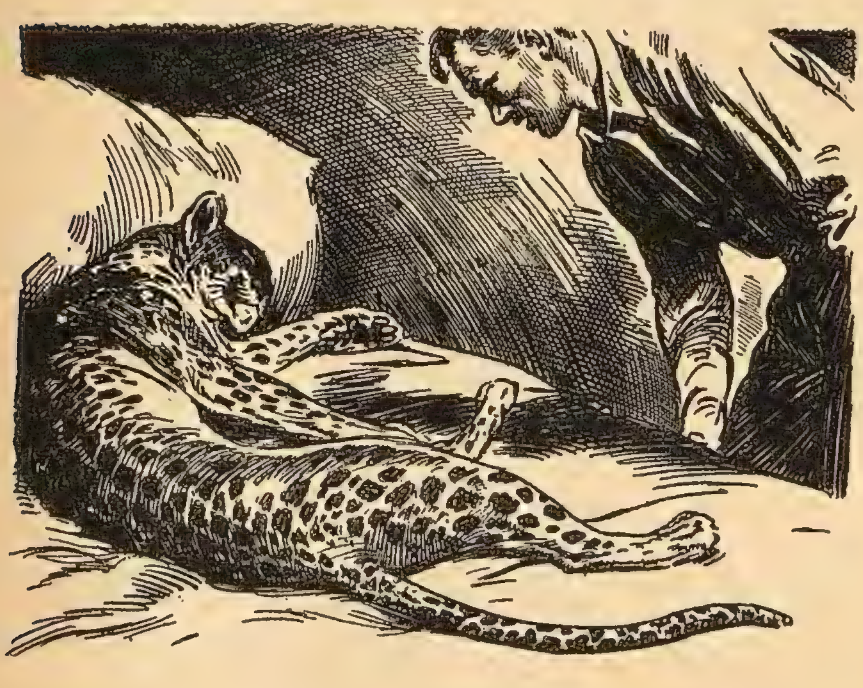
When the Colonel shook hands with me, he left a card in my palm. After we'd gone out I got a chance to look at it. The writing said, "I am expecting Don any minute. He doesn't know that I know he is in the show. Call me later Cherokee 4621." On the other side, it said his name. Colonel Rufus Clement Castleman, United States Army Medical Corps.

Mamma asked Bathsheba if she'd like to go to a movie and her eyes lit up like lanterns, and mine did too. We sat with our shoulders together and I hardly saw the screen at all. Once or twice she looked up at me and kind of half smiled. Once when she was saying something I let my ear get tickled by her hair, leaning close to listen. "I don't think he looked quite so tired tonight," she says.

"Who?" I says. "Randolph Scott?"

"Don," she says, and my goose felt like it was not only cooked, it was burnt to a crisp.

A cartoon come along with some kind of a smart little animal always getting the best of a big dumb skinny looking bear. All the other animals come to see them act Uncle Tom's Cabin. The big black cluck plays Uncle Tom and the little smart Aleck is Simon Legree, and he uncoils his whip and starts to lay it onto old Uncle Tom. As the whip wound around the bear's waist and went *pop*, my wrist was gripped like in a handcuff and I could feel her shoulder and her knee against mine, and she was shaking like a leaf. The audience of animals, both on and in front of the screen, yelled with delight each time the little feller let the bear have it, and that kept Papa and Mamma from hearing the deep, hoarse, dry sobs that come out of that poor girl. I knew I had to get her out of there, and quick.



It was the late show and there wasn't many people in the lounge where I took her. She wasn't sobbing any more, but she had a kind of a tight, skeered look. I lit a cigarette, and she stood leaning against a table and she never moved while I smoked a whole cigarette. As I leaned across her to drop the butt in a jar, she give me a pat on the shoulder.

"Go back and tell Mamma they mustn't hurry, and that we'll be here, will you, Tex?"

"Sure," I says, and went and did it. When I got back the two of us set down on a couch and she started to talk, not looking at me.

"You must think we're all crazy," she says. "You've worked all your life with horses and cowboys and they've all got sense. And here you are mixed up with people like my father and me and that poor little Major."

"How long have you been doing this act?" I says.

"When I was about fourteen my mother died, and he came and took me out of convent school. I had seen him do the act with Mother, of course, and I thought it might be fun to live in the trailer and to travel and all that. Even the show itself I thought would be fun. You see," she says, "when my mother did the show, he snapped silk handkerchiefs out of her shirt pockets and then whipped a cigarette out of her mouth and then he threw the eight knives slowly, so they framed her, and that was all.

"We started off that way too. And then I grew older. After that he changed the act."

"Maybe, between us," I begun saying, "maybe we could think up something that would—some way—"

"Oh, I used to make plans," she says. "But you don't know what it means to be afraid, so afraid of somebody that your brain stops working."

"Could I maybe be some help?"

She turned and looked at me and she looked as if she was going to say something that would sure be important to me, one way or the other. But that's when the Warburtons came for us. Then when we got to the waiting room of the street car place, there sat Don smoking on a bench. He got up slow and strolled out to where we was at. On the car Mamma and Papa Warb got a seat together. Sheba slid into another one, and Don sat down beside her. The only place left vacant was a single, right behind them. And so there I was, where I couldn't hardly help but hear most of what they said.

"I've told you if I tried to get away, and Papa and Mamma Warburton moved a finger to help me, he'd break 'em like a match," she told him.

"What about Unc?" he says. "I'm sure that as time goes on Unc will be your best bet."

"Didn't you know?" she asked him.

"What?" he asked quick and quiet.

"Unc," she says, "is dying." They didn't either one of them say anything for awhile. Then she went on. "Bessie and Tommie are my only other friends, and I couldn't be that kind of a burden to them. So I just go on from day to day, hoping that what I see coming won't get here. But what scares me most," she went on, "is the next day after he's been drunk. I know he takes something that steadies his hand for the show, but that scares me too. He seems to blame me for having to take it. And he's got a way of throwing the eight knives so that they stick in the wood and then vibrate so that each one slaps my neck hard three or four times. I can see it in his eye when he's going to do that and I brace myself for it. It's those times when my nerve goes and I cry after I get in bed."

"Do you think it's good for you to tell all this to me?" Don says. What was the matter with the guy?

"I've never had anybody anywhere near my own age before, that I could talk to, or wanted to." She turned towards him and put her hand in the crook of his arm and she looked up at him with a shining look of love in her eyes that ought to of turned a paralytic into an acrobat. But Don never even put his hand over hers.

WHEN we got off of the car I don't know how Mamma managed it, but Sheba walked with Papa, and Mamma walked between Don and me. A little squeeze of my muscle told me she knew how I was feeling and why. When we got to the show grounds, we waited for them to ketch up, and I had to stop Papa Warb as he started in their trailer and make him let me settle up for supper and tips and movies and carfare and all. Don excused himself to go see if Tatters was O.K. Then I had to hurry on back into town, till I could find a telephone.

"Thanks for calling," Colonel Castleman says when I got him.

"Don't thank me," I says, "I been pawing in the stall to get aholt of you ever since that night I first saw you."

"You mean you've got something to tell me?"

"Yes, sir," I says, "and something to give you too."

So we arranged for me to come to the Brown Hotel after the last show the next night.

When I got back to the Carnival everything was quiet, as quiet as the grave. No light in the black trailer, no lights anywhere; but standing under the flap of Princess Bessie's tent was Tommie.

"I'm pestered with trouble," he says. "Dat Lilly, she gone." He took me and showed me, like he said, how she done went and broke her chain.

"Hadn't you better call the police," I says, "before somebody gets hurt?"

"If I do dat," Tommie says, "we is shore ruint, and besides I shore wouldn't want to go to no jail so early in de season. Wouldn't nobody get hurt only that when she gits loose everytime seem like somebody start acting like she's wild. Lilly, she's trained when anybody act like dat, to act like dat, too. She rassles people, and I guess dat what give people de wrong impression of Lilly. If a person see her walking in their back yard or pouncing down over de back fence, jest talk nice to her, give her a little milk, or scratch her years, she act jest exactly like a big old pussy cat," he says. "You reckon she gonna come on back?"

"I don't know, Tommie," I says, "but I sure hope so."

When I got to our tent Unc was setting in the dark, smoking.

"I wouldn't strike a light if I was you," he says. "No use calling attention to the fact that you're a night hawk. I'd just turn in quietly."

"Is MacGrieff back?" I asked him.

"He's back," Unc says, "and drunk and mean as the devil. But he's gone to sleep."

"Well, say," I says, "thank you for staying up to tell me, Unc," I says, "specially as it's not maybe so good for you to lose your rest."

"When I get too old and feeble to stay up for a thing like this," he says, "it'll be high time for you to take this little key off this chain around my neck and to open that strongbox under my bunk and read what you find there and do what it tells you to do," he says.

"What do you mean, I'll find there?"

"My will, what else?" he chuckled. "Haven't I had a jack-leg lawyer over here writing *Whereas-es* and *Said-This-es* and *Said-Thats* and generally making a damn fool of the English language? Go to bed."

"No, but Unc, please tell me if you're all right or not."

"Listen, boy," he says. "If you want to make me happier than I've been since I saw Little Egypt wiggle at the Chicago World's Fair, go to your bed."

So I pulled off my coat and my boots and undid my belt and my tight necktie and rolled into my bunk. And I got the damnedest shock a guy ever had. There was somebody else already in my bunk. I let out a yell you could hear half-way to Cincinnati, for who it was, was the wettest, hairiest, wigglingest panther that ever any Christian got into bed with on a Sunday night.

Unc's laugh sure repaid me for the seven years' growth Lilly skeered me out of.

THE Colonel was waiting for me when I got to the hotel the next night. We shook hands, and he says, "Mrs. Castleman wants to see you, Tex. Have you got time?"

"Yes, sir," I says.

"I'm a fool, Tex," he says as we got in his car. "When Mrs. Castleman gave you the money, I thought it foolish. Then she lost her purse, and I—well, Tex—I—"

"You thought it was me that snitched it," I says.

"That was pretty dull of me, wasn't it?" he says.

"No, sir," I says. "I don't think so at all." And I told him just what happened, and how I had to make Don think the money for the dog come from me and then how he had insisted on paying the whole damn thing back. Though where he got it from I had no way of knowing.

"He borrowed it from me," the Colonel said, smiling.

So I explained how glad I was he fixed it so we could meet without Don knowing it, and that that was why I had come over tonight even with Unc sick like he seemed to be. And then, knowing he was a doctor Colonel, I couldn't help myself. "I wonder, Colonel," I says, "would you maybe come over and look at him, sir."

"I am one kind of a doctor," he says, "and for some things I can be pretty useful, but I'll get you somebody who will be better for your present needs than I could ever be, and I'll promise to ask him to come over and look you up."

We went through a gate and up quite a long driveway and stopped in front of the steps of a square house with soft lights in the windows.

Mrs. Castleman was standing just inside of the open front door. Her dress was gray and long, trailing on the floor, and I never thought to see a lady with white hair that was so doggone beautiful as what she was. Her smile was a warm light, and she held out her strong little hand and led me into a house that was just like her. It gave you a welcome, and said, Don't be skeered, you're all right.

The rooms was all square and there was square oil painted pictures of old fashioned people and the furniture looked just right with everything, and little things so pretty all around, and flowers in big bunches and lamps so soft you couldn't believe. And we was sitting down on a soft sofa and an old black man bringing coffee and little sandwiches. And then I was giving her the money and all of the things out of the lizard skin bag. At that she gave just one look at the Colonel. So then we sort of settled down and got quiet.

Out in the hall a mighty sweet looking young woman stopped for a minute as she passed by the door and glanced in at where we was setting. They didn't seem to notice her. Somebody outside called "Oh, Peggy," and she just took one good careful look at me and went on away. When she had gone, the older lady looked at me and looked away and there was a kind of silence that was full of something.

"That was Don's wife and I am Don's mother," she says. "Colonel Castleman is his stepfather. Don was a flyer in this war." She took a slow deep breath. "After he was discharged from the hospital," she says, "he wanted very much to kill himself and I think he might have done it, but I got him to promise me he wouldn't. That Carnival may seem like any ordinary carnival to you," she says to me, "but I suspect that it descended bodily from Heaven, and you with it, just to give that poor boy something to catch and hold his interest. And I thank the Lord for it every minute because, one way or another, I have the feeling that it may save him."

They asked me to promise I'd let 'em know if Don needed anything and that I wouldn't let him know I had been to see 'em. So then I said I guess I better be going, and the Colonel drove me to the place where you get the street car.

It wasn't until the next day that I remembered what he said about getting a doctor for me, I mean for Unc, but I had cause to remember it the next day, for then the doctor came, and what a somebody he was.

But this was still tonight. It had pretty near stopped raining, and everything was dark and mighty dismal when the street car and a wet walk got me back to the grounds.

I slept in the Show Ring tent, like I told you, mostly by myself, but not if Lilly had her way which was a pretty embarrassing way, but was just the natural affection of any female if you'll scratch her ears a little, which I sure was sorry I ever did do but too late to undo now. But tonight as I hurried past Skeet's tent I heard her chain rattle, so I knew it wasn't broke, so I knew where she was at. But I was getting more skeered about Unc all the time. So I didn't even stop to say goodnight to what he liked to call my lady friend and all such as that. No, I hurried on towards his trailer and was stepping it off to get there when a voice spoke out of the dark of the Princess's tent.

"Don't hurry yourself so, Mr. Texie," the Princess says. "He won't be going tonight."

THE Major was standing under the little awning built out over the door on the back of Unc's trailer. "Unc is talking inside with Bathsheba," he says. "I was sent away to tell Bessie to come and sit with him through the night. But I stood on this step to listen to her voice. Have you ever known anyone as completely possessed of evil as I?"

"I can't stop to remember now, Major," I says and I went up and knocked on the door.

Bathsheba said to come in, and I did. But I didn't get far.

"Tex," Unc says, "go on back out the door, walk over to our tent, get on a horse and smoke three cigarettes and then get off of the horse and come back."

So I went to the tent like he told me to and rolled and lit the first cigarette and threw my leg over Casanova's back and set there like I always did at night when I had heavy thoughts on my mind.

Just to feel that horse between my knees brought back my horse, Wahchooka, from the grave. And don't think he ain't got one, as nice and respectable a grave as you ever saw, and a neat headstone on it. "Here," it says, "lies an awful nice Horse." That's what it says, and he does.

At the second cigarette I knew there was somebody in the carriage right in front of Casanova.

"I came in here," Don's voice said, "to let my alleged mind try to figure out the amount of affection you can develop in a couple of weeks, when that affection centers on a really great soul."

"The Princess says he's going to die, Don," I says.

"I might have known it," he says. "You don't know, Tex, what that old man has done for me. You couldn't know it, because you couldn't possibly know how much I needed him. That level headed philosophy of his. I could tune in on it, fly on it in a straight course. That's what I've been doing, Tex. Flying along, blind flying, on the beam of his wisdom, flying along through a black night of fear. It sounds a bit poetic, I'll admit, but it gives me a picture, and that's what we juggle the silver balls of language for."

WE didn't say anything for awhile, and then his voice began again. "We haven't talked together, you and me, as much as you would have liked us to, have we, Tex? But I've talked to him. Boy, haven't I? Hours and hours on end. I've told him things that had been lost in my mind's attic for years and some, I guess, that have been buried down in its cellar. You wouldn't believe the number of nights, when I was ready to kick over, I've walked past this dark tent. My feet have kept step with your snores, Tex, so as not to wake you up. Steps took me, against my will, to that trailer, where I've sat at his feet and let him pour strength for another day's fight into this weak vessel, Don Paddock. And now he's going to die. Going to? Hell, he's dying right this minute. And when he's gone, what, I ask you, is to become of this brave, intrepid, this terror-ridden American pilot still flying blind when that beam cuts out. What's to become of me, Texas, my boy, what, I ask you, if anything?"

"What are you skeered of, Don?" I couldn't help asking him.

"I was to try to find that out that I've been keeping that old man awake, night after night after night."

"And have you found it out?" I asked.

"I was just beginning to," he says. "God, how hard it is to see what two and two makes when Four is the last thing you want to admit you've got inside of you."

"I don't know what that means, Don," I says.

"I hope you never will," he says, and that seemed like it was going to be that.

I put my second cigarette out and rolled the third one.

"Hold the light," Don says and got up and come back to where I was setting on the horse.

I lit 'em both, and he stood there, holding onto the throat latch and taking long, deep drags that lit up his face in the dark.

"Are you worried about me and Bathsheba?" he says.

"Why should I be?" I says.

"Because." And he took a long drag that showed his eyes watching me like gimlets. "Because if ever I saw the little boy with the arrows and the fat behind shining through a pair of cowpuncher's eyes," he says, "yours are the ones."

"Now, listen, Don," I says, "I wouldn't tell you no kind of a lie," I says. "I have had to worry some, like what you say, but I know damn well I got no chance in a race with a boy like what you are," I says. "Look at you," I says, "and then look at me," I says. "Sure I got my feelings like anybody else, and I got a right to 'em. But I got eyes too, and I can see a stampede coming before the steers trample on my corns. But now you've brought it up," I says, "I'll tell you the truth. I don't understand you, and it's natural, I guess, me and you being so different like we are," I says, "and there are times and I don't mind admitting it, when I've felt the only thing that would ease my mind would be to take you out and kick the living something or other out of you."

"They are the times I mean, Tex. I've known how you've felt," he says. "What I can't understand is why the hell you haven't done it."

"I guess I was skeered maybe I wasn't man enough," I says.

"You said you wouldn't tell me any kind of a lie," he says, "so don't. You wouldn't stop to think whether you were man enough to tackle Superman if you thought you had a grievance. Come on, why didn't you kick the something or other out of me?"

"Because," I says, "there's things about you I can't understand and I keep on thinking maybe what you're doing to me, you ain't doing," I says, "through enmity, but because you're so pestered in your own mind."

"In my what?" he says.

"Your mind."

"That is a term that may or may not be accurate," he says.

"Is that what you're afraid of?" I says. "I mean about your mind?"

"It's one of the things," he says. "Where are you going when you finish that cigarette?"

"Unc told me to come back over there," I says. I didn't want to go on for fear of what the subject might lead us into, but I had to. "Bathsheba, she's in there setting up with him."

"I know," he says. "I took her there and got sent away so they could talk." I guess he could feel what I was thinking about how she could get away, because he answered it just as if I had of spoken right out. "Black MacGrieff went out with Skeet again," he says. "I saw 'em in that saloon over at the car line and if they go on like they've started they'll both be stinking drunk when they get back. I don't like it."

"Me neither," I says and I got off of Casanova. I didn't want to talk to Don about Sheba, so I changed the subject to what I did want to talk about, because it was heavy on my mind. "Has Unc seen a good doctor?" I asked him.

"He's already been three times to the best men for his case in the whole country, the Mayos. He's not afraid to die. He's ready. He's willing, even a little excited what it will be like. But I'm not excited, Tex. I don't want him to die. It's selfish of me, I know, but I don't. I can feel my blood start to run backwards when I think of being without him."

We walked together to the trailer, and Sheba opened the door. "He wants to say goodnight to both of you," she says.

"Sheba," Unc says as we stood there, Don so slim and straight and me like I was. "Sheba, my dear child, look at these two. I've known 'em how long? Not two weeks. And still, somehow, these two are the fulfillment of all my crazy dreams, the friends I've tramped over the rough roads of a very big world looking for. Be good to my boys, Sheba. They're both a little timid. Tex, because he's afraid somebody will try to help him, and Don, because he's afraid, after I'm gone, that nobody can. Be good to Sheba, lads. She'll need you both. And now all of you get out, before I change my mind and get well."

So we left him and passed Bessie as she come in the door. None of us said anything, but we walked along, the three of us, with Sheba in the middle. While I was trying to think how to leave them together, Don stopped.

"I think I'll go to bed, Sheba," he says. "Goodnight. Tex will walk over with you," and he turned and walked off from us towards his canvas covered truck.

Sheba stood there watching Don fade away from her in the dark, and all of a sudden I knew she was crying.

"Oh, Tex," she says as she turned around to me. "Oh Tex, Tex, what can I do, what in the world can I do? I love him so, Tex, I love him so." And I had my arms around her.

Don't ask me how long it was before she could get aholt of herself and get her weight onto her own two feet so that I knew it was over and that I had to let go of her.

We walked to the trailer and she stood on the steps. "Tex," she says, looking down at me, "I know now what Unc means about you." And she took my face in her hands and she leaned over and kissed me on the forehead. "I'm so sorry, Tex," she says, "and thank you." And she went in and shut the door.

THE next day I didn't feel like keeping the Show Ring going, but Unc sent word to me that it worried him not to hear the music and the wheels on the track. I hadn't more than got going good, till who should come along and offer to help me but the Human Rocket. He had a black eye, a cut lip and one hand bandaged up.

“Black and Skeet got me up at daylight,” he told me, “both drunk and full of that stuff Skeet peddles. Black told me I was to hand over all the gas coupons I had. I told him my show runs on gas and nerve. But they took not only all of my stamps but two drums of Ethyl that I use for the show, and MacGrieff beat the hell out of me, as you can see. I'll get even with him if it's the last thing God lets me do.”

I asked the Rocket if he didn't have any gas at all. He said he had the tank of one motor cycle full of Ethyl, so I says why not give a couple of shows on that while the crowd was good.

“No, brother,” he says. “I promised somebody there always would be one tank filled up and ready, if ever he needed me,” he says, “and that's a promise I ain't ameaning to break.”

“But who'd you promise, Rocket?” I says.

“Mata Bala, the little Major that Skeet keeps on a chain like a trained bear.”

“But he's too little to ride a motor cycle,” I says.

“He ain't too little to ride double,” he says. I didn't like to ask any more, but I sure wanted to.

I went over to the trailer, and Bessie wouldn't let me go in and see Unc. “He sleeping jest now,” she says and she was all broke up but dignified. “He's getting ready to take de train, but I think he'll wake up, maybe, to say goodbye to us all. Mr. Unc don't never be what you call unpolite, and I don't reckon that he gwine start now.”

I WENT to tell Don and Sheba and Mamma and Papa Warburton and Tommie and the Major, and the word went around fast and everybody shut down.

It's funny how a crowd of people can be. They've each one got eyes and ears and noses and imaginations. Each one separate has got these things, I mean. And then they get together in a crowd. And that crowd's got senses too, and they make the crowd get excited or smell smoke or danger or start to stampede, not each one by theirselves but the whole crowd like one individual, all in one piece.

That's what I mean.

Like the time me and Wahchooka got hurt at the Garden. A lot of bulldoggers get spills. That's what the crowd comes to see at a Rodeo. And our spill couldn't of looked much different than most, as we went into it. But before we had hit the tanbark and long before anybody started out to get us, that whole crowd knew this wasn't just any little everyday mess. Everybody in that big place that wasn't crippled was on their feet in a second, and two thirds of them knew it was going to be a hell of a while before me or my horse was up on our feet again, if ever.

Well, that's what happened this time too. Every man, woman, child, and dog on that Carnival grounds knew in ten minutes that something was wrong.

By the time we gathered at the back of Unc's trailer there was a couple of hundred people there, craning necks and asking questions. I didn't blame 'em but I sure wished they wouldn't. We was all feeling so bad and so kind of exposed to strangers' eyes. Oh, we was used to it. Show people always get looked in at, while they're eating or pretty near anything if town people know where they're doing it. But this was disturbing, with no place for us to wait but right there where they was all looking and pointing us out.

Don's white face was still painted in that silly grin and Tommie in his green uniform and Tatters standing there with his tail down and his ears back, looking mighty sorrowful.

While we was waiting a big man come asking where could he find out a feller named Tex, and I said I was Tex, and he took me aside a little and told me he was Dr. Pennoyer, and Colonel Castleman had asked him to come over here and see what he could do for us. I took him in Unc's tent and the Princess went out and left us three in there alone together.

“Unc,” I says, “this here is Dr. Pennoyer.”

Unc looked at the doctor for a long minute. “Hi,” he says.

And “Hi,” the doctor says back. He sat down on a little stool looking as big as a trained bear.

“You run along, Tex,” Unc says, “and wait outside. Don't look so anxious and don't walk so slow. I promise I won't die till I've seen you all.” So I went out.

About nine o'clock the doctor opened the door and called me in.

“Tex,” Unc says, “I want you to take this chain off of my neck. I'm getting too old to wear necklaces.” So I unclasped it, and there was a key on it. “You're a good scout, Tex,” Unc says, “and I want to thank you, when you set out to find me a doctor, for bringing me the real thing. There wasn't much he could do except for him and me to say Hail and Farewell.” His voice was getting pretty weak, but I didn't dare to try to stop him. “But I didn't like to disappoint such a swell guy by not giving him something to take care of, so I asked him, as a favor to me, to make a kind of study of you and he says he will. Now, don't you start backing and bucking. Just say O. K., Unc, and if nothing comes of it, put it down to me being in my dotage, will you, son?”

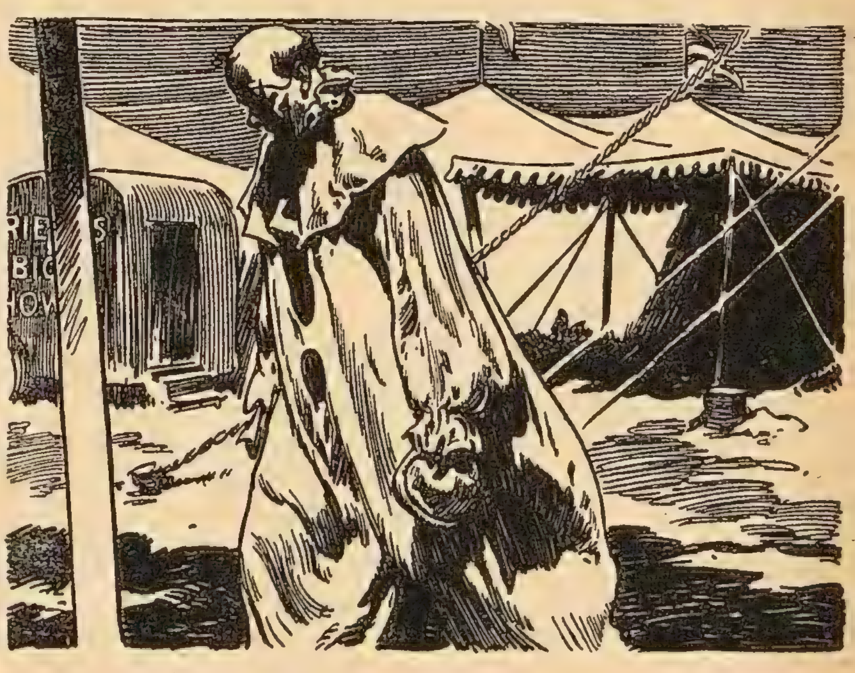
I looked at the Doc and then I says, “O. K., Unc.”

Unc smiled and seemed to settle down into his pillow. I come out and one by one the others went in, till they had all been in. Sheba was last, and when she come out, it was all over. She wasn't crying. She looked proud and not skeered of nothing no more.

Mamma Warburton put her arm around her and led her on away. When they was gone, I saw Don walking away in his ruffled clown suit with the red spots. He had the foolish little green hat in his hand and on his white-painted face was a look that would keep anybody from laughing at how Don looked, or even from wanting to. And it did. Nobody followed him as he went on over towards the saloon. I couldn't go after him, because I had to help Bessie and the doctor and call the coroner and the undertaker and do a lot of stuff that gathered a bigger and bigger crowd on the grounds, till the place was swarming with people, all milling around looking and making me feel like we was giving some kind of a show for them, a show that we'd of rather died than to give, but here we was going through with it all the same.

IT must of been around eleven o'clock when somebody come running in the tent behind me. I heard the canvas flap back, and in a second I knew whose steps they was, hurrying to me across the trampled grass.

“Tex,” Sheba says, “oh, Tex, what'll we do? The bartender from that saloon came over and got Tommie. He said Don was over there and that he was out cold. Tommie went running over to get him, and I came for you.”



“Come on,” I says and we started through the crowd. We got separated, and when I got to the covered truck, Tommie was climbing back out from under the canvas. I couldn't see Sheba nowhere.

“Don't go no further,” Tommie says.

“You mean she's in there?” I heard myself saying.

"It's de Lawd's doing," says Tommie, "de Lawd's doing, Mr. Texie."

I just stood there limp as a dishrag till Tommie led me away into his show tent where I stood for I don't know how long by the cage, scratching Lilly's ears, not thinking at all, just feeling, and feeling bad.

First thing I knew, Skeet threw back the flap of the tent and come in. "Black's here," was all he had to say for me to know he was all hopped up on stuff.

We all three stood at the open tent flap and saw Black MacGrieff walking careful like he wasn't sure the ground would stay there. He was coming towards us but we saw he was going to pass pretty close to the back of the covered truck. When he got right abreast of it the back flap on the truck swung back and out, and there was Bathsheba standing on the tail gate. Black stopped like he'd been shot in the back and turned his head slow and looked up at her.

For some reason Skeet got aholt of himself first. He walked right up to Black. "Listen, Black, old boy," he says. "I asked Sheba if she wouldn't come over and fix up this truck a little, maybe. See? That's the reason she was—" The next word was cut off short by Black's knuckles.

"Come down off of that," Black says to Sheba. "We're going to give a show. Come on." And he walked off and Sheba followed.

I climbed up in the dark truck and went inside. Don was laying up in the corner, but he was wide awake now.

"Tex," he says and he grabbed onto me like a little kid. "Listen, Tex, everything's all right. I can go back home. I was out, see, out a mile, and when I came around, a girl was here with me—I'm sure it was Peggy, my wife. She knew I was drunk but she didn't care and I didn't care. Peggy was so sweet, Tex, and forgiving. She never said a word about my barging off from home. She kissed me, in here in the dark, and somehow, suddenly everything was all right."

Then he called out "Peg" just once, fading off at the end, and he was out like a light.

I LEFT Tommie with him and went around to the front of MacGrieff's tent where all lights had been switched on. I saw the Rocket in the crowd and I saw Dr. Pennoyer, too. I'd supposed the Doc had gone long ago.

I went around the tent in the dark to where I knew Sheba must be dressing. When I got there, the Princess was just coming out from under the tent.

"What you want, Mr. Texie?" she says.

"I don't know," I says, because I didn't.

"She's all dressed and ready," she says, and she looked like something worse must of happened than even what I already knew. "Kin you believe it, Mr. Texie, dey gwine to show dis show tonight. It's de truth, de show getting ready to start up, soon's de crowd gets in."

"But she mustn't," I says. "She can't, Princess."

"I know," she says, "I know. I try to persuade her. I try de best I can to. But look like she speak cold to me. I tell her something bad might be about to happen, dat man like he is. Minute I seen him I knew he been taking some of dat stuff Skeet deals in. I try to tell her, but she speak cold to Bessie. I never hear dat child do dat before."

I went under the canvas where the Princess had come out from. There was a little light over a mirror, and there she was, smoothing her hair back over her ears. I saw her face in the glass. She looked like something had happened worse than anybody could be thinking of. She turned around and looked at me.

"Honey," I says, "oh honey, let me take you away from here, can't you?"

She came up close to me and the orange spangles made a little rattling, whispering noise as she moved. "Tex," she says, "you're sweet. Now go away and let me go on. It really doesn't matter to me now, Tex, no matter what happens."

I could hear the crowd coming in the tent on the other side of the velvet curtain, racing over the rows of plank seats, running to beat each other, to be right down in front.

I grabbed her and the spangles felt cold to my hands like dry fish scales. For one minute, it seemed like she relaxed while I pulled her close to me and put my arms around her and held her to me. I put my mouth on hers. For that one minute it was like dropping a long way off of something high and steep. And then she put her hands on my chest and backed away from me slow. And she said what told me everything.

"Tell me, Tex, do you know anybody by the name of Peg or Peggy?"

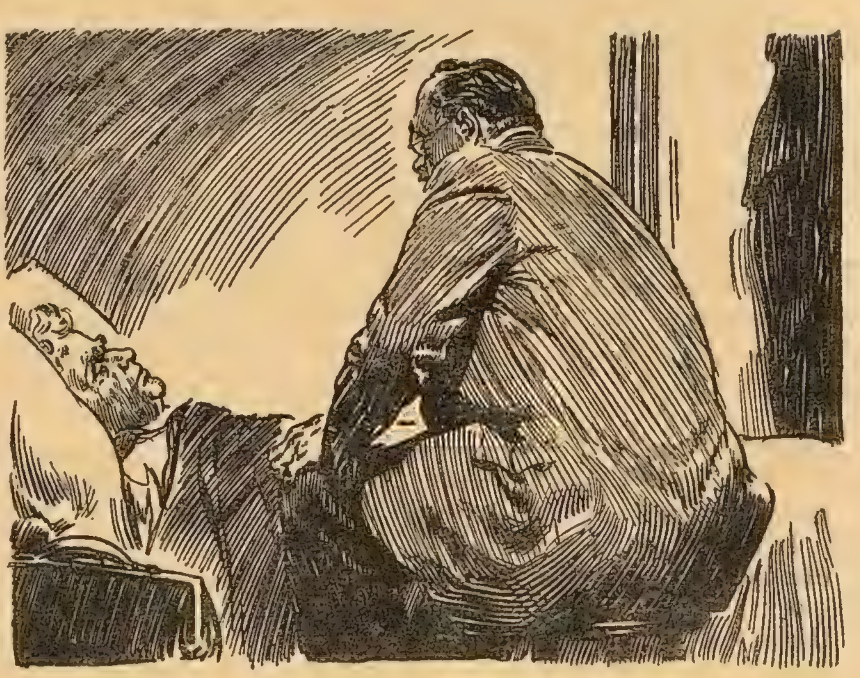
I had to say it. "Yes, Sheba. It's Don's wife."

"Thank you, Tex," she says, cold and quiet as ice. "Please, go away now."

And I did.

I crawled in under the side of the show tent, and eased up at the back of the audience.

The first thing about the show that was surely different was what happened when he had stripped Bathsheba down to her black lace things. As he walked around her, he had a grin on his bony face till he got right by her.



Then he stopped, and the grin disappeared. He leaned down and said something right in her ear. For just one little second, her face showed what you call real, honest to God terror. Then she looked proud again and scornful.

I dug my toes pretty near through my boot soles waiting for what was coming, and here it was.

The whip shot out and snapped twice, yanking off the black lace things. All of the eight knives was in the air high up over his head. I saw that look in her face again.

One minute, all eight of the knives was in the air and I was waiting for the first one of the lot to start that quick thud, and then they was all falling out of the air all around him, and he was on the floor with blood spurting out of his neck and out of his nose and his mouth, and the place went crazy.

When we got the lights on and the crowd out, he was dead. Dr. Pennoyer wouldn't let us do anything till the Coroner got there, for the second time that night.

The Coroner said it was very plain that in juggling those heavy knives, something had gone wrong and that one of them had come down point first and somehow had happened to go through his throat. He was a very nice man, the Coroner. He thanked the Princess for a cup of coffee and said that he had always liked juggling and had done a little of it himself, even getting as high as five oranges in the air all at once at the Lion's Club Christmas Party. He said it must certainly be a pretty difficult thing to keep those big sharp knives in the air, especially when you considered that there were nine of them.

Like a damn fool, I opened my mouth to correct him, when I felt a hand on mine that grabbed tight and held on tighter, and it was Princess Bessie.

I looked, and there was the eight knives that MacGrieff always juggled, and beside them was a ninth knife exactly like the other eight, except that the ninth knife was pretty nearly entirely covered with Black MacGrieff's blood.

THE funeral was simple and according to the wishes that I knew would be wrote down in the strongbox that Unc had gave me the key of, and they was, in a letter attached to the will.

If it was a fine bright Circus kind of a day, that's the way he put it, he wanted us to hyst the Wurlitzer organ onto a truck, and all go to the cemetery and let it play a German piece that was on it by the name of Nur Wehr die Zehnsucht Kenndt, that he said he always had thought was mighty pretty.

Then when it stopped, he wanted us to stand quiet for a little while and think about him, and he hoped maybe a couple of birds would fly by. Then he wanted Tommie to sing Swing Low, Sweet Chariot, while his box was lowered. And when it was down and settled, he wanted Bessie to sing You Got Shoes, while Tommie shoveled in the good earth to cover him.

"Tex," the letter read, "I want to be buried, complete, by those I love, Bessie and Tommie and the Major and Papa and Mamma Warburton and Sheba of course and you, Tex, and I want the Major to say the Buddhist Prayer for the dead and the Taoist and then the Confucian. And after all that, I want Don to say the Lord's Prayer and while he's saying it I want each one of you to put on my grave a little bouquet that you've carried out there in your own hands like they used to do in Europe, just a little bright bunch of the most beautiful things God has given us, except one, Horses.

"And now we come to it, Tex. The Show Ring is yours, my lad, no strings to it. But you know that where those horses move around their little track, there too will I be with you always, Unc."

I showed the letter to Sheba and asked her what was I to do.

There was, as you can imagine, a little problem about Don.

She was quiet and straightforward like always. "Do what Unc wanted. That's all that matters to me," she says. "But, Tex, you'll stand by me at the funeral, won't you?"

I said I sure would, and I sure did.

I didn't tell her that last night Tommie had left Don passed-out in the truck and come over to watch MacGrieff's last show. Nor that when he had remembered to go back after all that happened, Don was gone. But I thought I knew the telephone number of where he was at.

It was morning when I called him and he had just seen about MacGrieff in the paper. I got in a taxi and went out there.

Don was quiet, but something tight and pained had gone out of his face. I showed him Unc's letter with the instructions, and right away he said of course we must do it that way.

So we talked a little and then somebody was standing in the doorway, the pretty young lady I'd seen before, but hadn't been made acquainted with.

"Peg," says Don, "this is Tex."

We shook hands and hell, you'd of thought I'd done the whole damn thing and I hadn't done nothing.

Colonel Castleman had sent my taxi away and he drove me back. We didn't say a word about Don. And he told me something that broke me all up. Here we'd gotten Dr. Pennoyer over to see if he couldn't save Unc, and Unc took up the few precious minutes that was left to him urging Dr. Pennoyer to take me on. And I'm sure that's why he did take me on and do some excavating and a little inlaying and transplanting on my old back so that here I am setting up in the Hospital writing in a plaster jacket.

Last night my nurse said I could surprise Miss Sheba by setting up by the window for the first time to wait for her to walk in the door. The nurse went away, thank God, and I waited. I heard her firm little step on the rubber strip on the floor of the hall. And then she saw me and the carnations in her hand begun to tremble and all of a sudden I saw how glad she was I was going to walk straight again and her arms was around me and her soft cheek was against my whiskers and we was both crying like two kids.

"Listen, baby," I says after a while, "if this ain't love please tell me quick before I get used to believing it is. But, oh my darling, please don't tell me it ain't and please don't tell me you won't keep right on being glad I'm going to be all right like what the doc says I am, cause if you do, I swear I'll—"

That's all I could say for quite awhile because you can't say nothing if your mouth has got the sweetest mouth in the world pressed right against it, now can you?

WHAT else is there to tell? Oh yes, not that it matters, but I better tell it like it happened.

After the funeral I went to Sheba's trailer to talk to her about selling the tent and stuff. When I got there Mamma Warburton said Sheba was getting ready to go to MacGrieff's funeral and she was going along with her.

"Why would she go?" I says. "I'd think she'd want to forget a father like that."

"That's just it, Tex," Mamma says. "We opened the strongbox and when she found out he was only her stepfather, she said she'd go to his funeral, so we're going."

"Do you want me to go too?" I asked her.

"No, Tex," she says with a mighty understanding smile on her pretty old face. "I'll take care of her for you. Come to supper in our trailer. We've asked Tommie and Bessie and we asked the Major too, but he says he's afraid not. I wish we could get the Major away from that Skeet, but I'm afraid that one is too smart to ever let his meal ticket go. Anyway, we'll see you for supper."

I left her and walked around to the front of MacGrieff's tent and there stood the Major looking up at the big painted canvas poster flapping in the wind. And what the Major said to me I thought was sure one for the book. And then that thought stuck me like a pin, "One for the book."

That's when I first knew I was going to have to write this book, when he said that, with his little wrinkled face so gentle and like a little boy that has somehow learned to look at the world through man's eyes that know everything.

That's the way he looked when he said it, standing there in his little boiled shirt and stiff collar, not hardly big enough for a doll baby.

THERE was the picture of MacGrieff the Knife Thrower and there was a real knife caught in the canvas right where somebody must of throwed it, high up from where we was standing. But a dead shot, whoever did do it, for there it stuck right in the neck of the knife thrower in the picture.

"Tex," the Major says, "I never forget you. And for remembrance," he says, "that knife, you can get it down and keep it," and he put his little tiny hand that was as cold and as strong as a monkey's hand into mine, and he looked up at me. "Keep it," he says. "It belonged to my grandfather that was the brother of the Dalai Llama. I won't need it now," he says. "I only used it to practice."

"Where were you when you did it?"

"I was on the top of his tent. The knife I use, I steal from him after he cut me that time. I climb up a rope, I am a very strong man, and I watch through a hole I cut in the canvas and I have the pleasure to see his face when looking up at his juggled knives he saw my face up above him and knew why I was there. I would have done it long before," he says, "but I had made a promise to Unc. So when Unc was no longer my promise was no longer, too. And so goodbye, Tex," he says, and then his little eyes closed up tight because he was smiling, as he added, "my friend."

Just then I heard a kind of roar and the motor cycle shot past us so I had to jump back to keep from getting hit by the Human Rocket that was riding it even faster than what he did in his show.

When the dust settled I looked around me and the Major, little Mata Bala, was gone, snatched right out of the grounds and away to where I don't know and wouldn't never tell anybody if I did know, especially not that bastard Skeet.

Now let me see. What else?

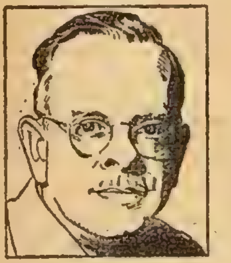
Well, I guess that's all.

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By Helen Greenwood

IN **Burma Surgeon Returns, Dr. Gordon S. Seagrave** continues the story of that immensely popular book, Burma Surgeon. Dr. Seagrave, the famous medical missionary, took part in Stilwell's retreat. Burma Surgeon Returns deals with the rebuilding of the Stilwell unit in Assam and their return to Burma.



Gordon S. Seagrave

Dr. Seagrave was not an orthodox Army doctor and he had little use for regulations and brass. The Seagrave unit was made up of Americans, British, Burmese, Chinese, and Poles. They did the job at hand with the materials at hand and did it well. Dr. Seagrave writes of the time a section of American infantry marched past their hospital unit: "Pin-up girl Big Hawk stepped daintily across the road toward the hospital.

"'Ann Atomy! Hao-hu-hao!' called an infantryman.

"'That must be the Seagrave Unit,' said another.

"'Sure it is,' said a third.

"'What are they doing down here so close to the front?'

"'They're always at the front. They operated in Myitkyina.'"

Seagrave's Burmese nurses called him "Daddy" and took all their problems to him, and they were many, for Burmese girls are pretty and soldiers are notoriously susceptible. The doctor often sounds like the beloved headmaster of a girls' boarding school.

The Burmese, Dr. Seagrave writes, used to say, "We fear and detest the Japanese. We are afraid of the Chinese. We respect the British. But we love the Americans, especially when they let our women alone." And he continues, "Though an occasional American white enlisted man or officer . . . had been known to offer insult to our Burmese nurses, not one single Negro soldier ever treated them with anything but respect. The girls often recalled with misty eyes the Negro soldiers they came to know so well."

W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., New York. Price $3.00.

PEGGY GUGGENHEIM'S complete frankness and almost total recall tend to make up for any lack of literary skill displayed in her memoirs, **Out of This Century.** Following the example of other women who kiss and tell, she has delineated her entire life and the lives of her family and friends with no noticeable omissions. That is why, on page 109, the reader gasps slightly at the sentence: "I lived in a repressed, unconscious world." Repression would seem to be something totally foreign to Miss Guggenheim's nature.

Peggy Guggenheim

"During the summer," she writes, "I got bored and started having my hair dyed a different color every few weeks to amuse myself. . . . As a result of all the time I spent in the beauty parlor I conceived a sort of weakness for the little hairdresser who worked so hard on my beauty . . . Therefore, on the coiffeur's free days I used to fetch him in my car and we drove off into the country together . . . Soon this got boring and I needed a change."

The last line of the memoirs is doubtless deeply significant—"But one lives and learns, or maybe one lives too much to learn." Most readers will concur with the final conclusion in Miss Guggenheim's case.

The Dial Press, New York. Price $3.75.

COCKEYED CROSSWORD

By Ted Shane

B	E	E	T	L	E	■	P	A	N	A	M	A
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C	E	R	I	S	E	■	E	M	E	R	G	E
S	T	A	T	E	S	■	S	I	N	G	E	R

Last week's answer

HORIZONTAL

1 When he goes on a picnic it always rains
10 Dictators have a gift of what?
14 It spends all its time supporting a car
15 Apple of the avuncular eye
16 Largest organ of a nervy person
17 Rio's, Hayworth's, etc.
19 Hup, tup, threep, forp . . . hup, tup, threep. forp . . .
21 Tea for Demosthenes
22 Horse manor
24 What folks get as a tick
26 Hollow men
27 Barfly support (pl.)
29 Blondie's biggest problem
31 Orgy of laughter in Edinburgh
33 Small things with big bites
35 The end of man and woman
36 It's cracked and soon will go to pot
38 They have a big influence on juries (fem.)
40 What you can go on a cheap trip on
42 Bird reputed to bring babies
44 Commingles, cuts, and divides
46 B.O. detective
47 Whose head is in the Bear's mouth?
49 Cusses out the canary cruncher
51 Negresses of the American Revolution (abbr.)
52 These have long passed the post-office retirement age
54 Scissored (simp. spelling)
56 Uncle Sucker (abbr.)
57 Cackleberry pies
60 Chief European product
62 Household money-making device
63 What Queen Elizabeth swept the floor with
65 The canary cruncher himself
68 What it's no use waiting for in Scotland
70 Liberty purchasers (commercial)
72 Zoop ziphon
73 Eat backward with a forward gal—
75 —and her girl friend
77 What the manager shed in the dismantled theater
78 Answer to why married women leave home
79 Most useless thing around the equator (two words)

VERTICAL

1 Man's most expensive pastimes
2 Here's a way out
3 Induction center to the battle of wife
4 Snood for a gal with a small brain
5 Heggplant
6 This goes round and round and tires easily
7 Reason for eating potatoes
8 Pretty tart
9 What the god did after he got the goddess tight
10 Haybag (abbr.) (colloq.)
11 Grain robber
12 Early Bataan
13 People who open their mouths and put their feet in them
18 What gals in mink do
20 Elephantisher
23 Animal you meet in zoo and crossword
25 Wolf with a sheep complex
28 Just a good old war horse
30 —— buggy (Tip: What's Hayworth?)
31 Flying egg beater
32 Substance known only to crossword answerers
34 A word of braise to a cook from Roebuck
37 If you crush this, it'll stew in its juice and get you cockeyed
39 Last word to get into the dictionary
41 Ecame, ——, elost his birthright
43 One thing Hitler did too rarely in his life
45 What my boss gave me when I asked for a raise
48 Sap of the tree
50 It gets all wound up and feels sew-sew
53 What cheap diners leave on tablecloths for waiters
55 Once a dame, cluck, jane, and moll, What's the newest name for a doll?
58 Lobsterland
59 Mortimer Snerd of Mother Goose
61 1404
64 He fiddled without a union card back in B.P. (Before Petrillo)
66 Man with college degree
67 Woik hahd in Brookalyn
69 Sticky thing babies love to swallow
71 Snore with handle attached (Wood zzzuzzer)
74 Last word in man's freedom, *cf.* I ——!
76 Haintita Shane? (abbr.)

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	■	10	11	12	13
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17				18	■	19				20	■	21		
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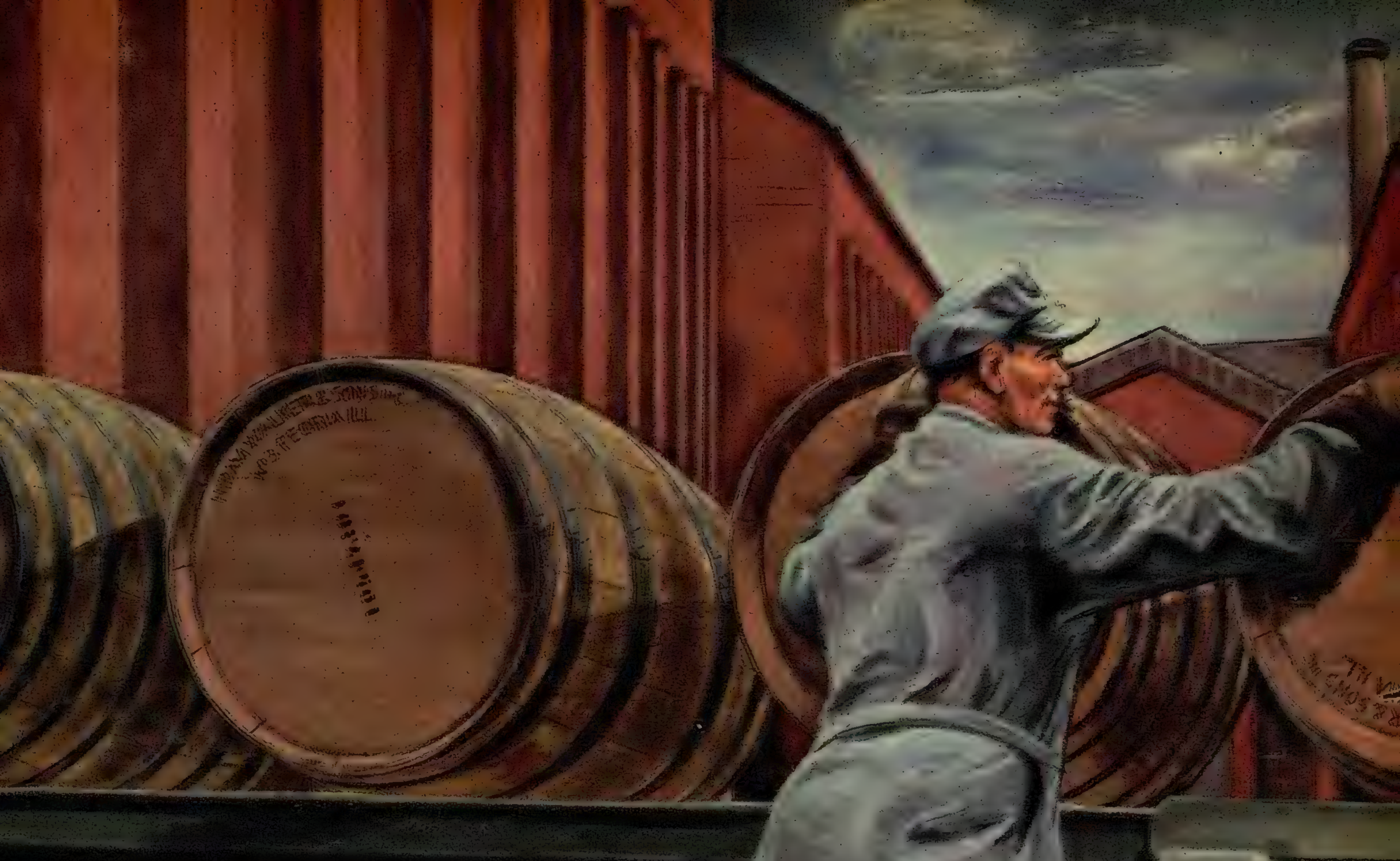
The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.



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86 proof. The straight whiskies in this product are 4 years or more old. 30% straight whiskey. 70% grain neutral spirits. Hiram Walker & Sons Inc., Peoria, Ill.

WHEN CHILDREN MARRY

Continued from Page 29

spent the whole day fixing up the house for us. She even went out and stripped the lilac bushes; whole house smells like that stuff I brought you—remember, twenty dollars an ounce?—from Paris."

"Mart—what are you talking about?"

He grinned down at her. "You and I are going to spend a week together. At my house. Unchaperoned."

"But, Mart—I can't believe it! What about Tommy and Pat?"

"Oh, they'll be around, of course. They go with the place, but they won't bother us. In school all day and bed at eight thirty." His voice thickened. "We're on our own, Josie. I come home at night and there you are in a cute apron, and we have dinner and put the kids to bed, and there we are!"

She said desperately, "Mart—I can't cook."

"Don't let that worry you. I won't know what I'm eating."

She couldn't quite understand her own sense of panic. It wasn't just being with Mart, being alone with him. They had gone away together for little snatches of time—a week-end in a luxurious hotel, a moon-drenched overnight camping trip. No, it wasn't that she was afraid to be Mart's wife. It was the family thing. The house, the little boys, badly cooked meals, Mart going to work in the morning and coming back at night, the unfestive *everydayness* of it.

What would happen to a star-dust-and-soft-music love in a setting like that?

She said weakly, "But I can't go home with you tonight. I haven't any clothes, or—or a nightgown or anything."

"I bought you a nightgown this afternoon. Black lace. Wait till you see it! And a toothbrush, little, the way you like them. Tomorrow you can go home and get whatever else you want." He looked down at her. "What's wrong, Josie? Don't you want to be with me?"

She laughed shakily. "I was just thinking how funny it would look in a society column. 'Mrs. Martin Sargent is staying with her husband for the week of April fifteenth.'"

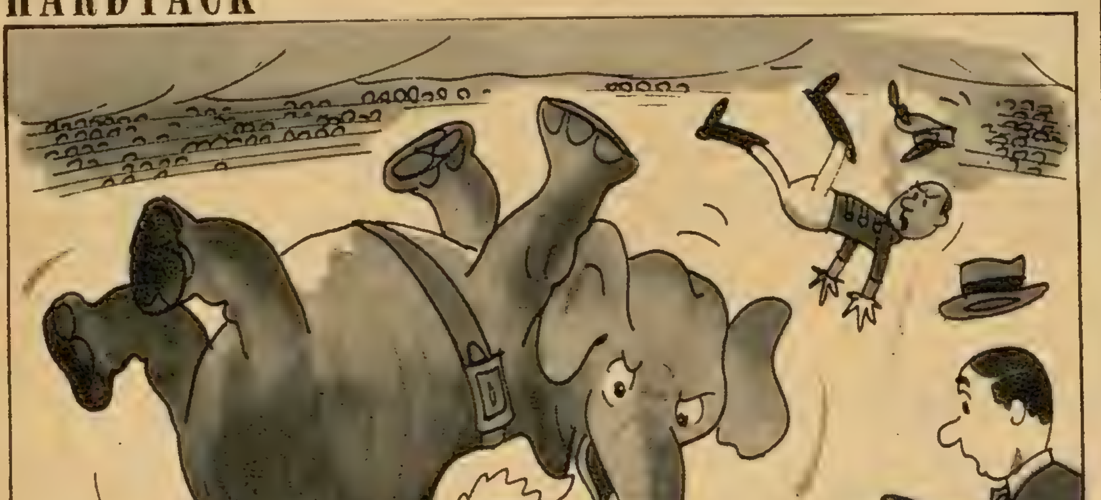
But she was thinking, I wonder what married people talk about at breakfast?

IT was strange to drive past her own street on the way home, to go on over the bridge to Mart's side of town. Josie hadn't been in Mart's house very many times. Mart's mother always made her feel a little uncomfortable. She was a big hearty woman with an outspoken manner.

Once she had asked Josie how old she was, and when Josie said twenty, Mrs. Sargent had said briskly, "Twenty—well! When I was your age I already had a baby—Margaret. She's the one who's going to make me a grandmother this spring."

That was all, but it had made Josie feel queer. Why, twenty was nothing—not even old enough to vote! But Mrs. Sargent had made her feel that she was sort of backward.

When they reached the house, Josie sat in the car while Mart went in, paid off the woman who was staying with the boys, and let her go. Then he came back and opened the car door. He picked her up and carried her over the damp grass toward the house. The telephone was beside a big chair in the living room, and he crossed over to it and sat down with her on his lap. He got her number and handed the phone to her.



Thank heaven, it was Vera who answered. "I'm staying with Mart for a few days," Josie said clearly. "Tell mother and dad. I said *tell* them, Vera—don't ask their permission."

She set down the phone and leaned back against Mart's shoulder. The house was close and dark and swimming with the smell of lilacs. She and Mart were alone. It was wonderful. Star dust and soft music and lilac.

MART had to leave early next morning and he wouldn't let her get up and get his breakfast. He told her that he would grab something downtown, and that the kids were still asleep. They were eight and ten, and quite independent about dressing and washing. All she had to do was fix orange juice, scramble two or three eggs for them, and send them off to school. His mother had it all written down on a pad in the kitchen. He leaned over the bed.

"Happy?"

"Terribly!"

"Maybe I could fix it up for you to board here permanently."

They giggled and sighed and let each other go, and after she heard the front door close she lay back luxuriously.

Presently she started up—it was twenty to eight. The children had to leave for school in less than an hour and they must be dressed and fed first.

A moment later, running down the hall to the boys' room, she called out, "Hi, there! Tommy—Pat, remember me? I'm the new housekeeper."

Pat was still asleep, but Tommy was sitting on the edge of his bed in his pajamas. He glanced around and said, "Hello, Josie," but he didn't get up. His face had a hot, puffy look.

"What's the matter? Aren't you going to get dressed, Tommy?"

He said, "I've got a sore throat."

"You have? Very sore?"

"No, just a little."

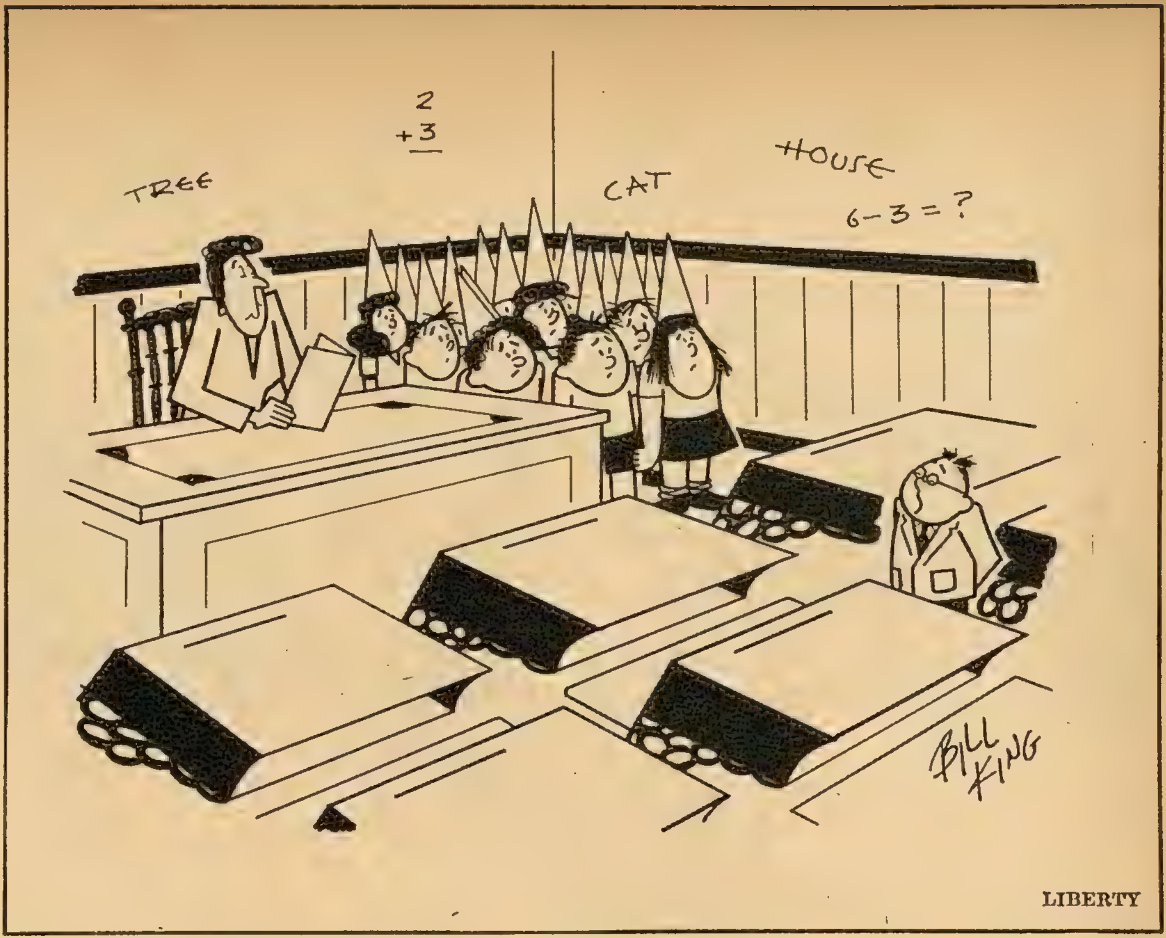
She looked at him and then she went over and looked at Pat. He was sleeping heavily. She put her hand on his forehead gingerly; it felt hot.

She said uncertainly, "Did you feel all right last night?"

"Oh, sure. I guess I'm just hungry."

That made her feel better. "Well, I'll run right down and start breakfast. Come on, Pat, wake up. Scrambled eggs in fifteen minutes."

When they came down she had everything ready, their places set beside the sunny kitchen window. "The boys," Mrs. Sargent had written on the memo pad, "have hearty morning appetites, but they get lunch at school and have an active after-school social life, so you can forget about them from 8.30 on. I've written down some simple, favorite supper menus, and there's a woman coming in to clean. So take it easy. The main thing is for you and Mart to be together. Surely it won't be long now before you two have your own home. Meanwhile this will be a rehearsal for the real thing."



She was touched by the note; at the same time she resented it. Mrs. Sargent blandly assumed that she would jump at the chance to wash Mart's dishes and take care of his little brothers and pick up his clothes and sew on his buttons. She pushed the note out of her mind and concentrated on the boys.

Neither seemed very hungry this morning. Tommy politely complimented her eggs, but he took only two mouthfuls. Pat smeared a piece of toast with jam and shoved it away from him. Josie didn't know what to do—send them to school with empty stomachs, or force them to eat, or what. Then her mother called, and while she was at the phone, explaining, the boys got away.

Vera appeared in the middle of the morning bringing a suitcase of clothes and part of a crusty baked ham. "Mother sent it. She said it would give you a start toward dinner."

Josie looked at the ham coldly. "I think I'll fix something for the kids, and then Mart and I will go out for dinner."

"For Pete's sake, why go out? You just got in! The whole point of this thing is the cozy, homey, fireside business, isn't it?"

"It's too cozy. It embarrasses me."

She was all mixed up inside. One side of her wanted to go out on a foursome with Mart and Vera and Vera's current date; maybe go roller-skating over at Playland, and lean up against a bar and drink colas. And the other side wanted to stay home and make a sweet-potato pie to go with the ham, and hear Mart say wonderingly, "But, darling, I never knew you knew how to make pie!"

"What's this slip cover you're wearing?" Vera asked. "Mrs. Sargent's? Sure is cute."

Josie untied the huge denim apron and flung it on a chair. "If you're going to gloat, do it where I can't see you," she said hotly.

AT two o'clock the phone rang and a cool unfamiliar voice said, "This is the school nurse. Mrs. Sargent, I'm sending Pat and Tommy home. They're both running a fever and their throats look bad. The school physician isn't here today, so I advise you to call your own doctor—"

The only words that came to Josie's numb brain were, "I'm not the Mrs. Sargent you mean—not the children's mother."

But as she spoke the weak evasion, she knew it wouldn't get her out of anything. She felt the slow, settling weight of responsibility.

"Oh! Well, are you in charge there?"

"Yes—I suppose I am."

"Then better call a doctor right away without waiting for Mrs. Sargent's return. They're pretty sick children."

She sat still after the voice had gone, clutching the phone, fighting the impulse to call Mart. No, Mart was working; he couldn't do anything she couldn't do. Her eye ran down the list of numbers on the phone-book cover. Dr. Wylie — of course! She called his office and left word for him to come to the house as soon as he could. Then she went upstairs, turned down the boys' beds, laid out their pajamas, and waited.

Mart's car drove in and she saw them all coming across the lawn together. Mart was carrying Pat and his face looked set and worried. When she opened the door for them, Mart spoke at once.

"Nurse call you? I don't know what's wrong, but when she sent the kids home, they came straight to my office. They didn't want to scare you —they knew you wouldn't know what to do."

She felt a prick of anger. "Really, Mart, I'm not a half-wit! Even I know enough to call a doctor."

Bending over the boys, hurrying to get them into bed, she told herself, Mart thought I just couldn't cope. What did he think I'd do—faint?

Mart's thin young face was troubled, apologetic. "Josie, I wouldn't have had this happen for a million. Of all the rotten luck—"

"Let's not talk," she said briskly. "Maybe it will turn out to be nothing."

But when Dr. Wylie arrived there was no longer any doubt. The boys were in bed, both their small chests mottled with red. They had scarlet fever and the household was to be quarantined.

"THIS will be a rehearsal for the real thing." During the next few days, at off moments when she wasn't sponging hot little bodies, or carrying trays or remaking beds or spraying rooms with disinfectant, or giving medicine, or whipping up a quick meal for herself and Mart, Josie remembered that phrase.

The nursing situation was very bad. She had not known there was an epidemic. Mart tried everywhere to get help, and finally got the promise of a practical nurse to come at the end of two weeks. Meanwhile the boys needed constant care, and it was only natural that Josie, conveniently at hand, should take over.

"Of course," Mart said confidently, "it will be only for a few hours. As soon as she hears about it, mother will streak for home."

BUT when he got her on the long-distance telephone, it seemed to Josie, sitting anxiously at Mart's elbow and hearing every word, that his mother was surprisingly casual about the whole thing.

"Naturally," she pointed out, "scarlet fever's nothing like as serious as it used to be. These modern drugs are wonderful! I must say the quarantine is a nuisance. Are they going to let you go to work, Mart?"

"If I don't go near the boys. I've got to stay on the ground floor. That means all the work falls on Josie. Mother, how soon—"

"Josie ever have scarlet fever?"

"Yes, fortunately, when she was about twelve. But her sister's never had it, and her mother teaches in a nursery school two days a week, so they aren't allowed inside the house. Josie's doing it all—nursing, housework, cooking. Mother, if you left on the night train—"

"You tell Josie I'll come home as soon as I can. Margaret's expecting to go to the hospital any time now and I can't walk out on her. Tell Josie—she'll understand. I know it's hard, but at least you two are together. That's the big thing, isn't it?"

It was the big thing. The first few days were a nightmare made bearable only by the knowledge that Mart would be there at the end of them. Her parents called daily, anxiously indignant at the calamity, at

Mrs. Sargent, at the doctor, at Mart. Poor Mart, bringing home little presents to make it up to her, flowers, new magazines she had no time to read, a ribbon-tied bottle of sherry. And Josie would meet him unpowdered, unbrushed, too tired to care how she looked.

"How was it?" he would ask. "How did it go today? Pretty tough?"

"Oh, not bad. They're such swell kids. We're getting along just fine."

At first these cheerful answers came hard. They were a price she paid to see that worried line smooth a little between Mart's brows. She never knew just when the cheerfulness began to be real, when the boys started to convalesce, and everything seemed to be suddenly easier. Midafternoons, when she gave a couple of hours to entertaining the invalids, became something that she looked forward to.

Pat had an illustrated copy of Treasure Island, and she started reading it to them, a few chapters at a time, and was astonished to find herself growing interested. In the evening Mart took over the reading, sitting on the stair landing (he was allowed to go no farther) with a lamp hooked over the railing so light fell on his book, and Josie and the boys listened from the floor above. At nine Josie would bring up iced orange juice for everybody.

And after Pat and Tommy were bedded down, Josie and Mart would go to their room and discuss the day and talk about how the boys were getting along. These evenings were not like any others that Josie had ever experienced, but they had a queer kind of satisfaction.

CERTAIN times stood out. One was the awful night when Pat had a fever of a hundred and five and they couldn't get hold of Dr. Wylie. And when she finally got the little boy to sleep, Josie went out and found Mart sitting on the stairs, waiting for her, and she sat down beside him in the dark and put her head against his shoulder and felt comforted.

Another moment was when Dr. Wylie complimented her on her nursing. Then there was the afternoon near the end of her second week in Mart's house.

She was sitting beside Tommy's bed, helping him put a model airplane together when he said suddenly, "Is this old Miss What's-her-name really coming to take care of us next Sunday?"

She looked up and said sharply, "Who's coming to take care of you?"

"The nurse. Last night, when Mart was talking to us on the stairs, he said it was almost time for her to come, and we ought to be glad because it would give you a rest."

"Well—are you glad?"

"No," Tommy said briefly, and Pat spoke gloomily from the other bed: "She won't be as much fun as you are. I wish you didn't need a rest, Josie."

"I don't! I'm not a bit tired."

"It's hard to believe he's started walking already!"

LIBERTY

It was true. She felt strong and capable and able to cope with things, and the feeling was new and delicious. That night she asked Mart to call up Miss What's-her-name and tell her not to come. It was absurd after the worst was so well over.

THAT was when the telegram came. Mart's protest was cut short by it, all argument and discussion were washed out of their minds. The message was simple and informative—her tardy grandchild was born at last and Mrs. Sargent would entrain for home tomorrow.

"Well," Mart said, "the worst is over, all right. It looks as though you and I could return to the carefree life."

"Yes," Josie said. Their voices were sober and thoughtful.

After a moment Mart said huskily, "Josie—remember those two dreary little rooms over the stationery store we looked at last fall?"

"I remember."

"I was wondering what could be done with fresh paint and—you know, curtains, all that fluffy stuff—"

Josie said earnestly, "New slip covers can do absolute wonders with secondhand furniture."

Mart was leaning forward now, his eyes warm. "I was thinking—why couldn't I partition off the sink-and-stove end of the kitchen and make practically an extra room? Of course, it's not much of a place for parties or having the gang in—"

Josie stood up, trembling a little. "Mart, is it for rent now—is it, Mart?"

"I stopped in yesterday. Couple's moving out end of the week."

Neither of them spoke. They stood, holding tight to each other, to the exquisite realization that there was no reason in the world why they couldn't go right on living under the same roof.

MRS. SARGENT timed her arrival nicely so that she could ride home from work with Mart. When they came in, Josie was in the kitchen and dinner was on the stove. The boys were washed and brushed and running around, bathrobed, in the upper hall. Josie held back a shade from her mother-in-law's hearty kiss and watched her steam upstairs toward Pat and Tommy. Mart hadn't come in yet. He was outside, puttering about in the garage.

Josie went on with dinner. When Mrs. Sargent reappeared in the kitchen with her traveling clothes exchanged for a florid cotton print, Josie didn't stop cutting butter for the table. She thought Mrs. Sargent would apologize now for staying away so long, or maybe make some grateful remark about the boys. But no.

"Mart tells me you two have found a place to live. That's a wonderful piece of news."

"It's just a couple of rooms. We looked at them last fall."

"You did? Why didn't you take them then?"

"Why, the place just didn't seem very attractive. It—it didn't fit into our idea of married life."

Mrs. Sargent was tying the big denim apron around her bulky waist. "This didn't either, did it, Josie? Taking care of sick children and getting messy meals and washing dishes? Pretty dull, wasn't it?"

"Not entirely," Josie said slowly. "That wasn't all there was to it."

"What else was there to it?"

"Well, Mart, of course! It was hard at first, and I was never sure I was doing the right thing, but I could always talk to Mart and we could worry together. Don't think I could ever have done it without Mart, Mrs. Sargent!"

"Josie," Mrs. Sargent said, "I'm going to tell you something. I could have come home perfectly well when Mart first phoned me about the boys. In fact, Margaret urged me to. But I was working on kind of an idea. All the time Mart's been back, you and he have just been dating each other. Dancing and dressing up and having fun. No marriage is going to grow up that way. I figured what you two needed was to share a little responsibility—trouble. You see?" She looked at Josie anxiously. "I wasn't thinking of the boys, in not coming home, or of Margaret. I was thinking of you and Mart."

Josie watched her hands arranging butter cubes on a plate and her eyes blurred. She said unsteadily, "Well, I guess it worked. I guess we've grown up—finally."

"You're a fine girl," Mrs. Sargent said. "You'll be a fine woman."

She put her short thick arms around Josie's shoulders, and they stood there, smiling awkwardly at each other. From the window they could see Mart come out of the garage and cut across the lawn toward the house.

THE END

THE UNHAPPY UNION BOSS

Continued from Page 27

all, he only accidentally hit it with his elbow."

"HE TOUCHED TYPE," said the composing-room foreman.

As this was likely to go on forever, the publisher and Mr. Benjamin retired to a corner and the publisher agreed to write a memo, advising members of the business office to stay out of the composing room on peril of their lives and also to offer no suggestions to the sporting department at any time.

Mr. Benjamin was satisfied; his colleagues were not.

"If the union was any good," the sporting editor said, as they went down the hall, "that guy would get thrown out on his neck."

The composing-room foreman muttered that the union was so spineless it might as well not exist.

Mr. Benjamin began to take a less benevolent view of the human race.

He returned to his desk, and Toby, the assistant city editor, who looked a little like an amiable pink-faced rabbit, deposited a sheaf of clippings on his typewriter. "Might as well get some of the shorts out of the way."

No one could help beaming on Toby, so Mr. Benjamin did. "How are things?"

Toby said sadly that he didn't mind sheriffs and bill collectors so much, but now his youngest daughter had to have her tonsils out.

Mr. Benjamin felt sympathetic, for it certainly wasn't Toby's fault that his family always seemed to have expensive diseases at the most inconvenient times.

"Would five dollars do you any good?"

Toby said it wouldn't because he was in the bucket for two hundred.

HE went away, and Mr. William Evans, known as "Uncle Willie," bounded out of his office and began to go up and down the floor at a fast trot, a cigarette hanging out of one corner of his mouth and his hands clenched behind him. Uncle Willie was regional director of the chain of papers to which the Courier belonged and the editorial department hoped he wouldn't give birth to an idea. Uncle Willie's ideas were always good for the Courier's circulation but hard on the staff.

He came to a stop beside Mr. Benjamin. "When's the union meeting, laddie?"

"Tomorrow night."

"Union's a great thing for the paper," said Uncle Willie. "Hope they make you president again."

He trotted off and Mr. Benjamin began writing shorts, though some section of his mind was wondering what was the matter with Geraldine and what could be done to prop up Toby's financial affairs.

A voice hissed in his ear, "It's got to stop."

Above him loomed Lloyd McGregor, the photographer, a small person puffing on a large unlit cigar.

"What's got to stop?"

"This," said Mr. McGregor. "I am eating my lunch in the Emerald Café yesterday and the slave driver sends over and pulls me out because there is a three-alarm fire. It spoils my lunch."

Mr. Benjamin suggested he complain to the fire commissioner.

"But that isn't the important thing," said Mr. McGregor. "The boys in the photo want a conference with you tonight."

Mr. Benjamin sighed and said he would be there. Mr. McGregor departed and so did Mr. Benjamin's pencil and a paper of matches.

That afternoon Mr. Benjamin would have liked to think happily about the union and how he had been president for three terms and undoubtedly would be again. Unfortunately there was a great deal of news.

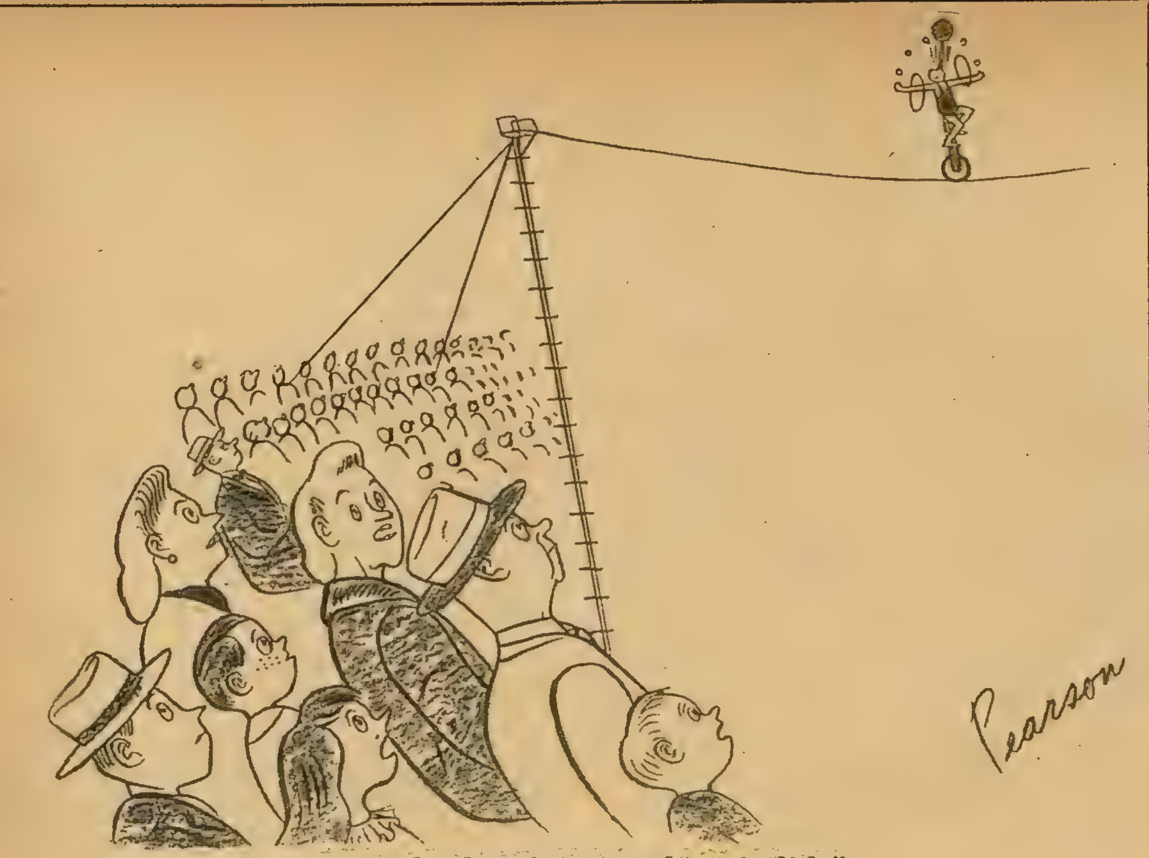
Two desks down, Geraldine smoldered at her typewriter. Behind her, Mr. Jackson was informed that a farmer had been murdered fifty miles away and he would write it. It fell to Mr. Benjamin to set down the deathless words of the mayor, who had denounced someone.

At the city desk the constantly jangling phones took Toby's mind off his financial troubles.

"Every drop is a strike!"— says HI to HATT

Guys make a quick decision when they first try Kessler's out
One highball proves that whiskey's major league, beyond a doubt!
HI
HATT
KESSLER'S Private Blend
KESSLER'S Private Blend BLENDED WHISKEY
KESSLER'S BLENDED WHISKEY
True Pre-War Quality
SMOOTH AS SILK but not "High Hat"

KESSLER'S PRIVATE BLEND. 75% Grain Neutral Spirits. 85 Proof. Julius Kessler Distilling Co., Incorporated, Lawrenceburg, Ind.



"I hope he doesn't try anything foolish."

LIBERTY

It was simply an ordinary busy afternoon until Mr. Jackson announced he was going across the street for a bottle of aspirin.

Mr. Benjamin noticed dimly that Mr. Jackson seemed to be taking a long time about it. He was reading over his story when a hand fell on his shoulder.

"Hi, Ben!"

He looked up and beheld a symphony in gray: gray Homburg hat, gray overcoat, gray-and-red-striped tie, suit of soft gray tweed.

"A pretty sharp outfit, if I do say so," said the twinkling redheaded gentleman encased in it.

Mr. Benjamin rose. "Well, Red! What have you got this time?"

"Kindly observe the socks," beseeched the redheaded gentleman. "They match the tie. I am press-agenting a comedy, which is just like a Noel Coward comedy except that it isn't smart or even funny. However, the customers don't know that and insist on buying tickets. Our advance sale is such, my dear sir, that we are in for ten weeks, on the strength of which I went out and bought the scenery. Admire it."

Mr. Benjamin did. He also admired his merry friend who had once worked with him on the Courier until he discovered that theatrical press agents were paid large salaries. "Ten weeks!" he said. "That's swell!"

The redheaded gentleman sat down on the desk. "It would be if I didn't have to write all the offal for the papers. Six readers a week, my good man, and also six specials about the exciting lives of our actors, all of whom should be shot."

An idea began to stir in Mr. Benjamin's head. "Why don't you pay somebody a few dollars to turn out the stuff for you?"

"Who?" said the redheaded gentleman.

Mr. Benjamin took his merry friend up to the city desk and introduced him to Toby.

He then had to pick up his telephone and listen to the court reporter's description of an extremely dull divorce case.

When he hung up, Toby was at his side, beaming. "Thanks, Ben. That friend of yours is going to pay me twenty a week just to do a little work for him. It's a lifesaver." His eye fell on Mr. Jackson's empty desk. "Where the devil's Steve?"

Mr. Benjamin said he had stepped out for an aspirin.

Toby remarked with bitterness that Steve was undoubtedly laying a liquid foundation for the aspirin.

"Sorry, Ben," he added, "but you'll have to write murder. Hutchins is on the phone with a story."

HUTCHINS was a country correspondent who never used one word when two would do as well.

"Well," Hutchins said, "it seems they found this fella lyin' out in the yard about a hundred yards from the main road—"

"What fella?" asked Mr. Benjamin.

With some difficulty he found out the farmer's name and age.

"As I was sayin'," continued the correspondent, "he was lyin' there, face down, about a hundred yards—"

"Any idea who murdered him?" Mr. Benjamin inquired with one eye on the clock.

Hutchins could be heard quivering with exasperation. "Can't rightly say if he was murdered or not. Might have been the bull that done it."

"What bull?"

"The bull that's loose in the barn, of course. Chief of police's out there now, seein' the critter's fed."

Mr. Benjamin began to hate country correspondents. "Look here, Hutchins, can't anybody tell whether the man was gored or hit by an ax or what?"

"Coroner can. He ain't here yet."

"When's he coming?"

Hutchins rose in wrath. "Young fella, you get off this line and put on someone who knows how to take a story!"

A short time later Mr. Benjamin found himself in the unpleasant position of having to write two takes on a murder that might not be a murder. He had fifteen minutes in which to do it.

He had done three paragraphs when Geraldine bent down beside him. "May I speak to you, please, for a second, Ben?"

Mr. Benjamin kept on beating out words. "Not now. Too close to deadline."

"I simply can't stand it any more," said Geraldine and went away.

Mr. Benjamin wondered what it was she couldn't stand, but was far too busy to find out. At six o'clock Mr. Jackson's desk was still empty. So was Geraldine's.

HE went to keep his appointment with the photographers. The first thing they did after ushering him in was to lock all the doors to the photo department.

Mr. Benjamin mildly raised his eyebrows and Lloyd McGregor flourished a forefinger in his face. "We ain't going up in any Courier airplane unless the company covers us all with twenty-five thousand dollars insurance apiece."

Mr. Benjamin pointed out that the Courier hadn't an airplane.

"Well, Uncle Willie's going to get one," said Mr. McGregor.

Mr. Benjamin said he doubted it.

"Then what's he keep walking around that way for?" asked Mr. McGregor.

When Mr. Benjamin finally escaped, he had already missed his train, and his sister, with whom he lived, would not be pleased.

He went up the street in great haste and nearly collided with Geraldine, who was standing dismally on the corner with large tears streaming down her face.

"What the devil's the matter?" asked Mr. Benjamin.

Geraldine's hands caught at Mr. Benjamin's coat and she clung to him. "Ben! Oh, Ben!"

Mr. Benjamin looked at a clock and it was late. But Geraldine was a union member in good standing and it was plainly his duty to put her into a cab and take her home.

So he hailed a taxi and thrust her into it. She began to sob violently.

Mr. Benjamin stroked her shoulder. "There! There! What's wrong?"

Geraldine said it was all so hopeless.

Mr. Benjamin lent her his handkerchief. Geraldine sniffed into it and murmured that Larry had a lovely soul.

The unlikely suspicion entered Mr. Benjamin's mind that all this had something to do with Mr. Ferguson, the dramatic editor.

"If I'm in love with him," Geraldine proclaimed, "I don't see why I should be ashamed of it."

Mr. Benjamin, confused, reminded her that Mr. Ferguson had a wife and four children.

"That's what makes it all so difficult," said Geraldine.

Mr. Benjamin asked if Mr. Ferguson reciprocated her affection.

Geraldine said he was so noble he concealed his feelings.

Mr. Benjamin was much relieved. He recalled that Mr. Ferguson regarded all feminine employees of the Courier as pests who probably wanted movie passes.

Geraldine informed him that Mr. Ferguson was Made for Greater Things than the Courier's dramatic department and that his ultimate destiny was as high as the stars. The taxi stopped before her house.

Mr. Benjamin was quite sick of hearing about Mr. Ferguson, so he helped her out as quickly as possible.

"Do I have to be an old maid all my life?" cried Geraldine.

Mr. Benjamin said perhaps a cup of hot tea would help and bounced back into his cab.

"What that doll needs," said the driver darkly, "is a good spanking."

Mr. Benjamin disagreed. Geraldine was not only a thoroughly nice girl but a first-rate reporter. Being romantic, she needed some peg to hang her affections upon.

When Mr. Benjamin reached home, his sister informed him that his dinner had waited so long that it was now spoiled.

UPON his arrival at the Courier next morning, Mr. Benjamin was not radiating good will. Even coffee and doughnuts with Herbert Crackercrumb did not cheer him up. He was sure he had caught a cold, and he found himself looking toward tonight's union meeting and annual election with no anticipation whatsoever.

Uncle Willie put in an appearance at a good fast trot and Mr. Benjamin hailed him. "Mr. Evans, is the Courier going to buy an airplane?"

"Certainly not," Uncle Willie said. "Costs too much. Let the photographers walk. Do 'em good."

Mr. Benjamin rose and went to the water cooler, where Mr. Ferguson was having a drink. He gave Mr. Ferguson a steely glance and Mr. Ferguson, not slow to take a hint, said he thought feminine emancipation had gone altogether too far.

With great tact, neither of them turned to look at Geraldine, who was smoking a cigarette at her desk. Mr. Benjamin still couldn't think what to do about her.

By noon his cold was considerably worse, and he would have disliked Geraldine a great deal except that she was so good-looking.

Someone was saying very shyly, "Good morning, Mr. Benjamin," and it was Johnny Hutchinson, who had once been the best office boy of all. Johnny, tall, dark, infinitely soft-mannered, had been spending the past two years in the Army.

Mr. Benjamin leaped to his feet. "Why, Johnny! Are you back with us again?"

Johnny said he was now an apprentice reporter and he understood he had Mr. Benjamin and the union to thank for that.

Mr. Benjamin beamed at Johnny.

"I—I don't know where I'm supposed to sit," said Johnny uncertainly, and Mr. Benjamin seized him by the shoulder.

He led him to the desk next to Geraldine's. "Geraldine, I want you to meet Johnny Hutchinson. He's just back from India. Johnny—Miss Wells."

He waited for the magic of Johnny's slow smile to take effect. "He ought to have some lunch, Geraldine. Take him out, will you?"

He observed that Geraldine had almost ceased to smolder, he observed that Mr. Jackson's desk was still vacant, and then he had to rush to answer his telephone.

"This is Mildred Jackson," said an angry voice. "What's happened to my husband?"

Hal Sacrificed His Chance To Win, But Then...
HAL FOSS, EX-FIGHTER PILOT, HAS A FULL LAP LEAD IN THE FIRST POSTWAR RUNNING OF THE FAMOUS 500-MILE METROPOLIS HANDICAP
FOSS IS A CINCH IF NOTHING HAPPENS!
O-O-O-H-H-H!
IT'S HIM OR THE FENCE!
5
MISTER, YOU'RE JUST PLAIN LUCKY!
YES, BUT THERE GOES THE RACE FOR ME
TOUGH BREAK FOR BOTH OF US, BOB
SIS, MEET HAL FOSS. HE LOST THE RACE, RISKING HIS LIFE TO SAVE MINE
AFTER THE RACE
CONGRATULATIONS, TOM. I COULDN'T LOSE TO A BETTER MAN
I'M THROUGH WITH MY RAZOR, HAL. YOU'RE NEXT
SAY, MY WHISKERS CAME OFF LIKE MAGIC. THAT BLADE'S PLENTY KEEN!
I ALWAYS USE THIN GILLETTES. THEY MAKE SHAVING A CINCH
I NEED A PARTNER AND DAD WILL PUT UP THE CAPITAL
A TURBO-JET AUTO ENGINE? WOW! COUNT ME IN!
M-M-M. NOW I'LL SEE HIM OFTEN
YOU GET SLICK-LOOKING, REFRESHING SHAVES EVERY TIME WITH THIN GILLETTES. THEY'RE THE KEENEST, LONGEST-LASTING BLADES IN THE LOW-PRICED FIELD. ALSO, THEY FIT YOUR GILLETTE RAZOR PRECISELY AND SAFEGUARD YOU FROM THE DISCOMFORT AND IRRITATION CAUSED BY MISFIT BLADES. ASK FOR THIN GILLETTES
Gillette
4 for 10¢

Mr. Benjamin told her about the excursion to get the aspirin.

"Well, he hasn't come home at all," said Mrs. Jackson acidly. "I do think the union could take better care of its members."

Mr. Benjamin hung up. The phone almost immediately rang again.

"Mildred is mad at me," said a morose voice that was undoubtedly Mr. Jackson's.

"She's always mad at you," snapped Mr. Benjamin. "Why don't you go home?"

Mr. Jackson changed the subject. "Will you send me over five dollars?"

"I will not. Where are you anyway?"

"I wouldn't think of telling you," said Mr. Jackson and hung up.

Mr. Benjamin did not feel kindly toward Mr. Jackson, but it was undoubtedly his duty to rescue him.

"BOY!"

Phyllis appeared at a gallop, companioned by a small dark girl named Marie.

"Have either of you seen anything of Mr. Jackson around the neighborhood?"

Phyllis chewed gum ecstatically. "He's over in the Emerald Café, crying his head off."

MR. BENJAMIN was far too busy to attend to Mr. Jackson himself. "Well, I'd better get a couple of husky boys to haul him out of there."

"You don't want any boys, Mr. Benjamin," Phyllis informed him. "Marie and me can do it better."

Mr. Benjamin surveyed Phyllis' muscles and agreed. "All right. You and Marie lure Mr. Jackson out, buy him a ticket, and put him on his train. Stick around till the train goes, to see he doesn't get off."

He began being slightly sorry for Mr. Jackson, but not much.

Indeed, he forgot all about him when Johnny Hutchinson came to his desk in an intense state of embarrassment. "Mr. Benjamin, I've been away for a long time and everything seems awfully different. Tell me, is it all right for Miss Wells to pay for my lunch?"

Mr. Benjamin surveyed Geraldine. She no longer smoldered and she had a new air about her, maybe a slightly maternal one. Mr. Benjamin was much pleased.

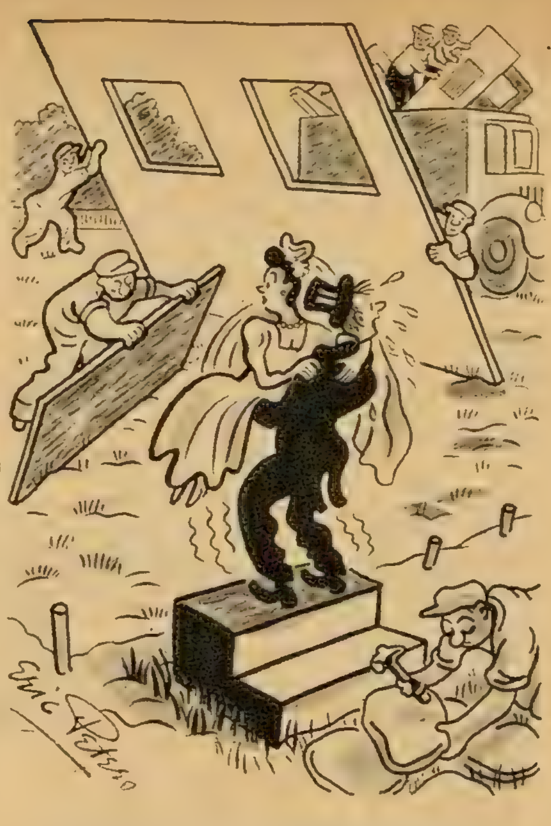
"It's quite all right, Johnny," said he.

The afternoon then began going very badly and work piled up on Mr. Benjamin's desk.

So, knowing his sister's temper would not have improved, he called the hotel where the union meeting was to be held and engaged a room for the night.

He had no sooner done this than two copyreaders came over and complained about hours. As they had chosen them themselves, Mr. Benjamin began to get aggravated.

The phone rang and it was Mildred Jackson. Her husband had arrived home in a much damaged state. She wanted Mr. Benjamin to know that she considered the entire affair the fault of the union.



"Hurry up with that threshold!"

LIBERTY

Mr. Benjamin's hatred of the human race grew to huge proportions.

By six o'clock he not only had no interest in the union meeting, but was appalled by the prospect that he would probably be re-elected president for another year. That would mean twelve more months of rescuing Mr. Jackson, appeasing Mildred, being beset by Lloyd McGregor, trying to wring wage increases from the publisher, and being blamed by one hundred and ten union members because they weren't bigger. People would constantly complain to him and then be most ungrateful when he tried to satisfy them. Mr. Benjamin was beginning to get thoroughly sick of his subjects.

Well, he could do something drastic about it.

AT eight thirty that night he arose in a smoke-filled room and surveyed such union members as had deigned to attend. It seemed to him that he had never seen so many revolting people in his life.

He had a sore throat, which did not improve either his voice or his temper.

He had all the feelings Cicero probably possessed when he was about to denounce Catiline.

His tones would have been thunderous except that he was too hoarse. "It's high time the members of this union woke up to themselves."

His eye fell upon the poisonous person of Lloyd McGregor. "You're always complaining you don't get paid enough, and three quarters of you don't ever do an honest day's work for an honest day's pay."

His gaze shifted to the head of the copy desk, who wanted to be president and now probably would. "You elect officers and then start silly intrigues against them. You're never satisfied. You keep wasting everybody's time with childish complaints. You claim to be newspapermen and there aren't half a dozen good newspapermen among you."

There was a shocked silence and Mr. Benjamin blew his nose bitterly. "If you ask me, you're a bunch of temperamental, quarrelsome, fault-finding old women."

He stalked to the door and slammed it behind him.

Then he ascended to his room, took three cold tablets, and went to bed.

He put his head on the pillow and assured himself he was now entirely at peace—but he did not seem to be.

His conscience told him that perhaps, in his zeal to prevent his again being president, he had been a trifle too severe. After all, the staff were only human beings—and human beings are bound to be fallible.

He would now be president of the union no more. It would be a long, empty year, for he suddenly realized that he actually liked listening to people's complaints and trying to satisfy them and that there was enjoyment in rearranging the staff's lives—even in a very minor way.

Mr. Benjamin, like a crowned head deprived of his kingdom, began to be very unhappy.

THERE was a boisterous banging at his door, the light was snapped on, and Lloyd McGregor advanced to the easy chair and sat down.

"Well, we got you in again," said he.

Mr. Benjamin sat up unbelievingly.

"Yes, sir," said Mr. McGregor. "That was a swell speech you made. Swellest I ever heard. You sure laid out those reporters and rewrite men nice."

Mr. Benjamin blinked, for he was just learning a universal fact: that if you denounce people in public, they all think you can't conceivably mean them but are speaking of someone else.

"Yeah," said Mr. McGregor comfortably. "They all got it coming to them. Never did an honest day's work in their lives. Some of the boys got sore at what you said and wanted to vote you out, but Geraldine got up and, boy, did she burn them down! And then Toby told what a good guy you are, and then *I* got up—"

Mr. Benjamin felt so extremely odd, he concluded the cold must be giving him a fever.

"Well, I just thought I'd tell you," said Mr. McGregor and departed.

Mr. Benjamin scratched his head in wonderment at the ways of human nature and then realized he wanted nothing in the world so much as a smoke. He rose and prowled about, looking for his cigarettes.

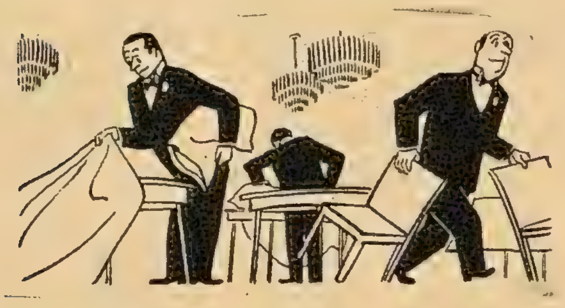
He discovered Mr. McGregor had stolen them.

THE END

Woman-Talk

BY
MARGARET
FISHBACK

BRAVO, CITRUS BOYS!—I welcomed an unusual announcement from the Florida Citrus Commission. It came in the shape of an invitation to lunch at the Park Lane Hotel. Across the face of it had been written in red ink the one word, "Canceled." A letter accompanied the cancellation, which said, "This spring we planned to bring you more than a whiff of Florida's glamor at our annual Food Editors' Luncheon. We planned to show you the new products which will put Florida citrus on our tables every day of the year. . . .



We had things all lined up to make this luncheon one that would not only be fun while it lasted, but one which would provide you with the last word in news about food. We even had your invitation addressed and ready to be mailed. Instead, other news became more urgently important—news of millions of innocent people caught in the aftermath of war and facing starvation; requests from President Truman to back up his Famine Emergency Committee; the realization that we in America were the ones who could insure such relief by conserving food. . . . That's why we are withdrawing our invitation. . . . The Florida Citrus Commission will donate the funds which would otherwise be spent for our luncheon to the purchase of Florida citrus products for overseas distribution by UNRRA. . . ."

BUS BUSINESS: It seems to me one woman's bus troubles must resemble countless other long-suffering citizens'. Perhaps we could organize and get somewhere. How about encouraging good manners in bus drivers by being pleasant ourselves? . . . The driver who quips instead of snarls communicates his good nature to all the sardines in his care, and his and their nerves and digestions are the better for it. . . . And must a bus always be jerked to a stop? I don't believe so, for I have ridden on buses whose drivers managed to pilot their vehicles without shaking the customers apart. Other points to be included in this crusade: 1. Have signs indicating destination displayed on the stern and sides as well as on the bow, so the would-be rider, hotly pursuing a bus, will know whether it's worth his while. 2. Have all bus windows fixed so they can be opened. 3. Allow passengers to disembark at red-light stops, whether or not such stops coincide with regular stops.

HOW TO KEEP HIM HAPPY

When the man of the house comes home with roses
Enough to delight a dozen noses,
Embrace your hero, and squeal, "Divine!"
And never say, in a plaintive whine,
"Of course it was very sweet of you, honey,
But what an extravagant waste of money!"

PLAY SAFE: The firm of Lewis and Conger of New York has presented its first Annual Home Safety Award to the Trilmont Products Company of Philadelphia for the Trilmont safety heater, selected by the judges as "the most outstanding appliance to promote greater safety in the home produced during the year 1945." The award, a large bronze plaque, was exhibited at a dinner to which writers and radio commentators were invited, along with the three winners of "Honorable mention." The Trilmont heater, which is easily portable, is said to have reduced fire and electric shock hazards to a minimum. It utilizes *non-glowing* coils, so there is no danger of a person or material coming in contact with *glowing* coils, the chief cause of personal injury and fire. The appliances winning honorable mention were the Kler-Vue knife rack, the Mason bath mat, and Luminite, a lighting switch plate. Among the speakers was Ned H. Dearborn, president of the National Safety Council, who pointed out our gruesome accident record—while 392,000 of our people were killed on combat fronts between Pearl Harbor and V-J Day, 600,000 were killed in accidents in this country.

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HOME SAFETY
AWARD

Now they call them Tampax Days

(Formerly known as those difficult days, those certain days or just "those days")

Tampax users may agree on the superiority of this method of monthly hygiene, but their reasons vary widely.

GLORIA SAYS: "I CAN GO IN SWIMMING" Yes, Tampax is internally worn, without external belts, pins or pads. You don't feel it when in use and you need not remove it for your shower, tub or swim!

BETSY SAYS: "DON'T NEED A DEODORANT" Right you are, Betsy! With *Tampax* no odor can form and there are other comforts too. No chafing. No bulges. Quick changing; easy disposal. . . .

LUCILLE SAYS: "IT RAISES MY MORALE" Tampax relieves embarrassment at such times. So dainty and efficient that millions of modern women have adopted it. For sale at drug stores, notion counters, in 3 absorbencies.

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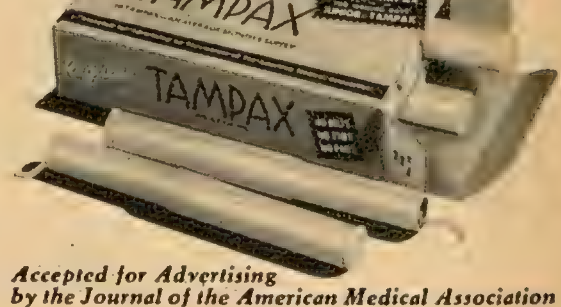

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DON'T LEAVE ME, GRANDMA

Continued from Page 33

leading to something she had decided long before. "Well, William," she said, "when Spot goes, I'll leave here and come to the city."

Mother leaned over to grandma and touched her cheek. "Dear Mrs. Harding!" she said. "We'll try to make you happy."

Dad was exuberant. "Mother, do you mean that?" he said.

"Yes," she said, "I mean it, William. I may be old, but I'm not quite a fool yet. I'll move to the city when Spot goes." Her voice was cool, but it was trembling.

NEXT morning when I drove back from the station in the surrey with Russell I was feeling forlorn and lonely, and I was close to tears when we drove into the barnyard. I went slowly up the walk to the house, alone. Then I saw grandma. She stood on the porch just outside the kitchen door, nodding and smiling at me. She was a small woman, very erect, and with a broad, almost unwrinkled face. She always wore neat black-and-white print dresses in the house, but this noon she had changed to her gray silk, and on her gray hair she had pinned a lace cap, quite unfamiliar to me.

"You're all dressed up, grandma!" I cried. "What for?"

"Company," she said gravely.

"Who?" I demanded.

"Miss Margaret Harding is honoring me," she said, "as my dinner guest."

I stood there, bewildered. I was Miss Margaret Harding.

"Perhaps," she went on, "Miss Harding would care to dress? Dinner will be served in ten minutes."

I giggled then, and ran upstairs to my east room, and found my best white dress, my pink sash, and my white slippers on my bed. I struggled into them, made a sad job of my long hair, and tore down again.

Grandma and Russell were waiting in the dining room across the hall from the parlor. Russell was grinning all over his kind foolish face, and he had on his store suit instead of his overalls. The mahogany table was laid with white linen and the very fragile china that usually stayed in the big cupboard at the side of the room.

"Will you sit at my right, Miss Harding?" said grandma formally. "And, Mr. Brown, will you sit opposite me?"

I was fascinated. I accepted the whole thing as a play, and falling into my part immediately, of course forgot that mother and dad were speeding away to the West. I called grandma "Mrs. Harding" and the embarrassed Russell "Mr. Brown"; I ate fried chicken and drank cambric tea with deliberate airs; I followed grandma's leads in small talk, trying to include Russell, who enjoyed the chicken but not the style. Over in a corner of the room Spot tidily devoured his dinner.

EVERAGES
SANDWICHES
gregor

"This one is different—it'll be quiet for five minutes if you put in a dime!"
LIBERTY

The feast over, Russell departed awkwardly. I was surprised when grandma, instead of clearing the table at once, took me out to the porch, where we sat, two ladies, chatting decorously.

My curiosity burst out at length. "I never saw you wear a cap, grandma!" I cried.

Grandma unpinned her cap. She laid it on my knee, a square of fine lace. I know, because I have it now.

"It was my grandmother's," she said, "your great-great-grandmother's. It will be yours some day, because your name's Margaret, like hers."

"But I was named for you," I said, fingering the lace lightly and respectfully because of its age.

"And I was named for her," grandma said. "My mother thought a lot of her, even if—" she paused.

"Even if what, grandma?" This began to sound like a story.

"Oh, the family had some trouble because my mother married my father. My grandfather didn't like it." Her small head lifted proudly. "He wasn't a gentleman, my grandfather said."

I was considerably puzzled. "What was he, grandma?" I asked.

"Such distinctions mean nothing here, Margaret," grandma said vigorously. "But this was in Ireland, long ago."

After a moment of silence she took the lace cap from me. "It was all my grandmother could give my mother, except some money, which was gone very soon. It's a sad business, Margaret, marrying against your family's wishes." She rose briskly. "Come on, child. Let's change our clothes and do the dishes."

THE time slipped by with a delightful ease, full of activity in the house and the fields, but I liked most of all to be with grandma, for somehow I felt that I had never really known her before. She let me help her and made me feel that what I did was important. Together we would go down the damp stone steps from the summer kitchen into the ancient Indian cellar, and she always asked me to carry the oil lamp to light our way. It was chilly to the bone down there, where perishable food was kept: sweet butter from grandma's churn and thick cream were in a hanging wire safe near the ceiling, and a can of milk always stood half submerged in the tiny ice-cold spring off in the corner.

I loved Mondays, because I helped grandma with the washing. On Monday the summer kitchen was filled with thick steam, and clothes boiled themselves white in the huge iron kettle let down into the great stove out in the shed. Grandma rubbed and scrubbed, and then together we staggered to the lawn with the basket. We spread sheets and pillowcases and tablecloths over the grass to bleach, and hung the other things on the line—Russell's overalls next to grandma's neat white camisoles and my small white petticoats. One Monday, I remember, a windstorm with rain in it blew up, and grandma and I tore around to gather in the clothes. Her long skirts swirling about her, her gray hair tumbling down, she ran here and there, as fast as I, after an escaping tablecloth, while Spot barked in delirious excitement. Grandma seemed no older than I that day, she ran with such speed and agility.

Best of all, however, I liked the evenings, when we sat on the porch, she and I, listening to the katydids and to the occasional sleepy stampings of Ned and Bess in the barn.

ONE night it rained, very quietly, a spring rain thrust abruptly into August. All at once I began to imagine that it was snow, and I remembered dad's stories of his boyhood, and I thought of the meadows filled with deep whiteness, the trees bare, Ned and Bess shivering in their stalls, and grandma alone in the house, with Spot close to the Franklin stove. Russell would be with her, I tried to remind myself, but I could never think of Russell as quite real, although grandma explained I must be patient with him because his mind wasn't as old as mine. "He's good to animals," she often said. "I sometimes think he understands their language."

That night the dismal picture of winter I had conjured up was too much for me. I thought of dad and how he worried about grandma when the snow fell, and I said, "Grandma, come to my house with me when I go home."

I felt her sharp eyes scrutinize me. "Now what on earth," she said, "put that into your head just now?"

All I could say was, "It must be lonely out here in the winter."

That night Grandma said, "Come here and sit on my lap, Margaret."

I was almost as tall as she, but I curled up gratefully on her lap, comforted by her nearness.

"Margaret," she said, "I'm never lonely. I never have been. I got used to being alone long ago. I've taken care of myself since my mother died, and I was only fourteen then, and all alone in the world."

I put my head down on her shoulder and said, "Tell me, grandma. Tell me all about it."

She hesitated for a moment. "Well, why not?" I heard her murmur to herself. "All right, Margaret. You're old enough to hear about it."

AGAIN she was silent, and then went on in her quiet voice with the lovely lilt in it. "You see, child, my parents were very poor when they came here from Ireland. Remember I told you that my mother's family didn't want her to marry my father? Well, when they came over here they had almost nothing—just the little money my grandmother gave my mother and the clothes on their backs and my grandmother's lace cap, and their two daughters, of course, me and my little sister Bride."

"Like Aunt Bride," I said. Aunt Bride was beautiful, with long golden hair; she lived in New York with her husband, who was an artist, and she seldom visited the farm.

"Yes," said grandma, "like your Aunt Bride. My little sister was named for my grandmother in Ireland. She didn't live long in this country, my little sister. The black diphtheria took her when she was hardly more than a baby. We lived in the city, and nobody cared much whether poor Irish emigrants lived or died in those days."

"In Philadelphia?" I said.

"Yes," she said, "in Philadelphia. It was a mean neighborhood, and a mean house we lived in, but my mother made the very walls sing because she was so happy with my father. She brought me up very carefully. The rough children on the streets made fun of my English because it was better than theirs and because I didn't swear, the way they did.

"Mother had black hair like yours, Margaret, and sometimes I see her look out of your blue eyes. That's why I'm telling you about her.

"My father worked as a day laborer," grandma went on, half in dream, "and we got along all right—we got along. Until he died when I was nine, and my mother was left without him. She had a terrible time. Then finally she saw there was only one thing to do: she hired out as a servant and put me in a home."

My face flushed with shame; this was something I had never known before. "A servant!" I said.

Grandma must have read my tone, for she went on quickly. "I'm proud of my mother! Just think, in Ireland she danced at balls and never lifted a finger to wait on herself, and here she went out in service to strangers for her daughter's sake."

The sound of quietly falling rain on grass and on the thick leaves of trees in August are inextricably connected in my mind with grandma's story. I can feel her thin arms around me and her roughened fingers catching in my hair as she stroked it. I can hear Spot's long satisfied sighs as he dreamed at our feet.

"But she didn't live long," grandma said—"only three years after my father died. And then I was alone indeed, and at fourteen ready to go into service myself."

Grandma! My beloved little grandma a servant! I could hardly bear to think of it. She continued quickly.

"They were a good family and they were kind to me. They were farmers, and I grew to love the land. I lived with them four years, and then I married my employer's hired man. Mr. Harding was an Englishman, but he didn't like England, so he ran away from home when he was a boy."

Grandma was silent again for a moment, while her hold on me relaxed a little, as if she were intently thinking of events in which I had no share.

SHE pulled herself out of the past and came back to me. "I married Mr. Harding when I was eighteen, Margaret. And he brought me home to this farm. He told me afterward he'd been saving and saving to buy it ever since I came to the place where he worked, when I was a little girl only fourteen, all pale from the city and skinny from not having the right food. He told me he fell in love with me then, although he was twenty years older than I was. That's why I always called him Mr. Harding; he was so much older. He was the best man on earth, Margaret."

I thought languidly of the daguerreotype on grandma's bureau, of a thin forbidding face, and wondered at her description of my grandfather.

"He died when your father was thirteen. Oh, Margaret, it was terrible! I didn't know he was so sick, and it was wintertime. The boys and Sam, the hired man, were doing all the work. I remember the day he died. That morning I was in our bedroom, straightening up. Suddenly he said, 'I pity you, Maggie, I pity you,' and he was lying there looking at me, very solemn. And I didn't know what he meant. I knew when he died that night and I realized I was left alone on a farm with four children, your father the oldest."

"Why didn't you move, grandma?" I murmured.

I could feel her shoulders grow erect against mine. "This was my home," she said proudly. "This was the home your grandfather brought me to as a bride. Besides, I'd seen

Should a girl tell her parents everything?

MUM'S THE WORD when you're *afraid* to tell the truth. That's why, for a while, I'd never let on to Dad when I needed a laxative. That terrible-tasting stuff he used to make me take was so high-powered that it would just about floor me! I certainly was glad when he found out for himself that

SOME LAXATIVES ARE TOO STRONG!

BEING "CAGEY" didn't work, either, when Mother decided that I ought to try one of those insipid-tasting "sissy" laxatives! No matter how hard I'd try to conceal the fact, Mother *always knew* when I needed something. It was only after I convinced her that the stuff wasn't giving me proper relief, that she finally agreed that

SOME LAXATIVES ARE TOO MILD!

COMPLETE FRANKNESS was restored in our family when the folks decided to give Ex-Lax a trial! Ex-Lax is such a swell laxative that I never hesitate telling them now, when I have to "take something." Tastes good—like fine chocolate. Acts good, too—gently, yet effectively. Not too strong, not too mild . . .

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As a precaution use only as directed.

EX-LAX

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10c and 25c at all drug stores

enough of the city; it had killed my father and my mother and my little sister."

I must have been nearly asleep, for her voice was coming from somewhere far away, and she laughed gently. "Bedtime, Margaret," she said. "You'll forget this by morning, I suppose."

Suddenly I threw my arms around her neck and began to sob. I was homesick and sad without any reason I could analyze. The sound of the rain falling into the grass made me feel lost and alone, but somehow I knew it was grandma's aloneness I was feeling rather than my own. I could only say, "Come upstairs with me, grandma. Don't leave me —don't!"

She rose, still holding me in her strong old arms, staggering slightly under my weight. Spot rose, too, from his station at her feet, and we three went in the house together. In the front hall she put me down and I followed her into the kitchen.

Grandma turned up the wick in the kerosene lamp over the table, and the kitchen took shape with its soft glow. Spot crossed the room to the outer door and stood there patiently, wagging his stump of a tail and looking suggestively over his shoulder. Grandma saw him and laughed. "He wants to go see Ned," she said. "Well, Spot, come on. Coming, Margaret?"

I nodded sleepily. I liked these occasional trips across the dark barnyard, when Spot showed his desire to spend the night in Ned's stall rather than at the foot of grandma's bed, and I was proud because he was willing to leave me there with grandma; it made me feel responsible for her. Grandma bundled me in my coat and hood, and threw her shawl over her head, and then, holding a lantern high, led our little procession across the yard to the barn.

THE wavering light made the shadows dark, but I was not afraid. I was never afraid of that passage to the barn, for the barn had warm and living things in it.

Ned was munching at his hay, and I stood on tiptoe to pat his nose. He nuzzled my fingers delicately and whinnied. Spot, at my feet, barked and scuttled past us into Ned's stall. There in the corner he solemnly made his three conventional turns and settled down with a thump and a satisfied sigh. He was where he wanted to be, out in the barn with his friend. Ned glanced down at him and removed his head from my caress. Grandma touched his nose. "Good night," she said. "Good night, Ned and Spot." She patted Bess too, as if she didn't want the mare to feel injured, and then we went out, she and I, barring the door behind us, back across the barnyard. The rain had stopped and a little breeze had started up. Above us we could see the tall shadow of the windmill and hear its wheel slowly turning. Halfway to the house grandma paused a moment and stopped with the lantern in her hand. She had been carried so far back by her own story that for the moment I think I did not exist. I heard her murmur, "This is my home. I've kept it all these years." And then we went on to the house.

Upstairs in my own east room she undressed me, for I was very tired now, and when I was in bed she turned the wick in the lamp down until there was only a faint blue ring of flame where it sat on the table by the door. I was terribly sleepy by now, but I protested when she started to leave me; I was still feeling lost and alone. So she sat down by my bed and in her unmusical cracked voice began to sing. Her speaking voice was beautiful, but she could not sing. It was a strange lullaby indeed: "My wife and I live all alone in a little brown house we call our own." It was a jiggling merry tune, but it sounded deliciously mournful when sung in her small reedlike voice; and when it came to the refrain, with its "Ha-ha-ha, ho-ho-he, little brown jug, don't I love thee?" and Grandma tried to inject a laughing note, I loved it best of all.

So I must have fallen asleep at last with grandma at my bedside, and so she must have removed the lamp and gone to bed.

For the next thing I knew was the dawn, and sunlight thrusting through my eastern windows, where morning glories climbed the wall around the chimney outside. I dressed and sped across the hall. Grandma's door was open; it was never closed, except when she was dressing. I looked in and saw her gray head upon the pillow.

Last night was a dream I didn't think of. This was just a morning like any other, only that I was up before grandma. I slipped downstairs. Russell would probably be out in the barn.

"Did you wash your face and clean your tooth?"

LIBERTY

But Russell was not in the barn. He was standing on the grass just outside the kitchen door, staring down at something, standing very quiet and not doing anything. Something in his pose made me come out quickly and stand beside him.

There on the ground lay Spot, the lively little fox terrier who would never be lively again. He was breathing draggingly and painfully. His eyes were closed and there was a great black bruise on his side.

"R-Russell," I said, my teeth chattering, "wh-what's the matter with Spot?"

Russell did not look at me. He was simple-minded, as we all knew, but he loved the animals, and now he was suffering with Spot. "Ned must of stepped on him," he said. "Stepped on him in his sleep. Found him just outside the stall when I went out. He was tryin' to crawl to the house. I carried him up. He wanted to get to your grandma, I guess."

I stood stock-still, not moving, and then I said, "Will he be all right?" I was terrified.

Russell shook his head. "He's done for," he said. "He's dyin'."

For a moment I stood there. Then I turned and fled into the house, tore up the stairs and into grandma's room, crying. She had wakened in the few minutes since I had seen her, and was standing in front of her bureau in her short white petticoat and her white camisole with the blue ribbons around its high neck. Her hand was halfway to her gray head, I remember, with her comb, and I gasped out, "Grandma! Spot's dying. Ned stepped on him, and he's dying."

She stood without moving for a curiously elongated instant, and then she darted past me out of the room, not even stopping to put on her wrapper, down the stairs with a speed I couldn't match.

She came to a halt at Russell's side, and said sharply, "Spot!" The little dog opened his eyes briefly, tried to wag his tail, and when she stooped down tried to lick her hand with his tongue. Then, as if what he had been waiting for had happened, he died.

WE three said nothing. I can still feel the sun's warmth on my shoulders, still hear our old rooster crowing, still hear the locusts whirring in the air. I can still see Russell's sad, stupid face, still see grandma's bare shoulders and the black comb in her hand as she knelt by the dead dog's side. I was the first to speak, because I had suddenly remembered something.

"Oh, grandma," I said, "now you'll come to the city with us. Now you can sell the farm. Now—"

I stopped, for I looked at her face and saw an amazing, incredible thing. Grandma was crying.

THE END

OPERATION LIFEBUOY

Continued from Page 15

a major source of controversy throughout the American zone.

If Operation Lifebuoy is meant to punish those who strung along with the party, or bowed to the party's various wiles to increase membership, then it is perfect. As a punishment for a professional man, there are few measures as excellent as a life sentence at manual labor. If, on the other hand, the measure is designed as part of our re-education program, then it does not accomplish the purpose. If it is neither of these, but is effected for the purpose of making the occupation run more smoothly, it also fails. These points are argued in American military occupation circles, in the press, and among German civilians. What the answer is, only the future can tell.

Meanwhile, how do these thousands and thousands of ousted professional and business people live? How is the community getting along without them? Every town has its doctor, teacher, police inspector, librarian, innkeeper, banker, and merchant. Communities are always sentimental about their own men of affairs, and especially the German community, whose strange admixture of loyalty, neuroticism, brutality, and sentimentalism no one on earth can pretend to fathom.

ALTHOUGH Heidelberg is not a typical German community, because it is influenced by the university, it does offer some excellent examples of how Operation Lifebuoy works. For the basis of the town—butcher, baker, candlestick maker—is pretty much the same as elsewhere, except that it is somewhat outscaled by the preponderance of professional brain power.

Walking down the Sophienstrasse in Heidelberg, you're apt to run into Karl Greichgauer, the cop on the beat. Greichgauer, who is fifty-eight, is a typical bourgeois. And until two months ago, he was *Oberkriminalsekretär* of his community, or top kick of the crime-detection branch of the local police force.

Greichgauer joined the police force in 1912 as an *Unterwachmeister*, or ordinary policeman—the lowest rank of the force. After studying law for a couple of years he became eligible for a position in the *Kriminalpolizei*, which is something like our F.B.I.

Greichgauer finally got to be *Kriminalsekretär* of Heidelberg in 1933, and in 1940 attained the top rung of the ladder when he was promoted to *Oberkriminalsekretär*—a difficult post to attain for a non-party member. But in 1942 he made the fatal mistake of joining the party (allegedly under pressure and in fear of losing his position). This he regarded as a concession after ten years' resistance against the demands to join. However, he refused to step out of the church (he is an

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COLONEL STOOPNAGLE'S FICTIONARY

TON-SORRY-AL: A sad barber.

NO-TORY-OUS: Winston Churchill.

UN-BEAK-COMING: A homely parrot.

PLANE-TIFF: Carpenter taking a quarrel to court.

TRANS-GRASS-OR: He ignores the "Keep Off!" lawn signs.

PARA-FUR-NALIA: Eskimo garments.

SIGH-KICK: Spiritualistic beef.

AB-STEAM-IOUS: An electric locomotive.

ANTSESTRY: An emmet's lineage.

NIGHT-TROJAN: The evening air of ancient Troy.

ardent Catholic) despite the party's policy in that matter.

When the American Army advanced through Germany and was nearing Heidelberg, the local police force was ordered (on pain of death) to evacuate the town and head northeast. Everyone on the force pulled out but Greichgauer. He sat tight and waited for the Americans. When they arrived he offered to co-operate, and was given the job of reorganizing a new police force under military supervision. By the middle of last September, Oberkriminalsekretär Greichgauer had everything in *Ordnung* (he is a man who likes his *Ordnung*), with a new force set up, files in order, and a brigade of German cops tracking down the perpetrators of petty crimes and misdemeanors.

THEN came Directive JCS 1067 and Greichgauer went out with the Lifebuoy wash. As a former party member, he was informed, he could only stay on with the force in the lowest rank of *Unterwachmeister* and walk a beat as he had done in 1912. After a nervous breakdown, Greichgauer bowed to the decision and showed up for work. Three considerations brought about the decision: first, he has dependents and a home to keep going, as he lives with his wife, his widowed niece, and her little son. Second, rations—no work, no eat. And third, if he relinquished his status on the force completely, he would forfeit the last vestige of hope of ever getting any part of the pension he is entitled to after thirty-four years in office. Unterwachmeister Greichgauer makes RM 190 (or nineteen dollars) a month in his new job.

And there is Fritz Gabler who was president of the Alliance Internationale de l'Hôtellerie, a hotel association which represented twenty-two countries, including the American Hotel Association of the United States and Canada. Gabler also owned Heidelberg's two biggest hotels, the Europäischer Hof and the Victoria. Herr Gabler is in his sixties, tall, white haired, and speaks three languages. His wife also bears the earmarks of a cultured background. Her only son and most of her relatives were lost in the war.

Gabler's two hotels were requisitioned immediately after the war, but he himself was retained as manager of the two. Like many of the so-called better-class Germans, he co-operated willingly with the American Military Government and his record was good. However, he had joined the party in 1937, and when the new directive was issued, he and his wife were requested to leave their apartment at the Victoria and were forbidden to enter either of his hotels again. And until further notice, he is not allowed to work in any capacity except that of manual labor.

The Gablers are now living with their married daughter and are happy to have a roof over their heads. Almost all their personal effects are locked up at the hotel. They still have enough wearing apparel and get enough food to be comfortable, and they are allowed to draw RM 250 a month from their frozen account for living expenses.

Like almost everybody else who has been ousted from professional or business life by Military Law 8, the Gablers have put in a petition to have their case reviewed. This is usually a pretty long-drawn-out process, however, because the Army wants to finish screening the unscreened before it tackles the re-screening of the screened. In the meantime the Gablers have been invited by the French to come over to Baden-Baden (French zone) to open up and manage some hotels for them there. It seems that Gabler got on well with the French during the war and used his position as president of the Alliance Internationale to argue the cause of French hotel owners.

This brings up another odd quirk of the de-Nazification problem that is presently a subject of much controversy. While de-Nazification was a quasi-official agreement between the four occupying powers, no one else is very much concerned about who was a Nazi and who wasn't. The other occupying powers don't seem to look upon the former party member as a potential menace and they let him alone as long as he obeys the rules of his zone. In the Russian zone, de-Nazification is now known to have stopped completely. What de-Nazification was done was accomplished by the military immediately after the end of the war, and consisted of throwing the active leaders of the party and those in administrative positions into the clink and forgetting about them. The rest are getting a flattering amount of attention only in the American zone.

THE current attitude of the four occupying powers toward the Germans breaks down like this: To the Americans, there are two types of German—Nazi krauts and non-Nazi krauts. To the French, there are the *bons Boches* (who sell wine) and the *mauvais Boches* (who haven't any to sell). To the Russians, the German falls into either the category of the possible Communist (if he has nothing) or that of the impossible capitalist. To the British, the German is either a bloody thickheaded idiot who doesn't even understand the king's English, or the German who speaks English and is a jolly decent sort.

The Germans are beginning to catch on to this lack of unity of policy among the occupying powers, and you hear more and more cases of German civilians "fleeing" from one zone to another.

In the beginning, most of the Germans sought to get out of reach of the Russians. They preferred the American side, or, as second choice, the British. The general impression now, however, is that they get a better break with the British, and this feeling is especially noticeable farther north, in and around Berlin. A surprising number of Germans in that area are expressing the increasingly popular theory that the only solution for Germany is that she become a British colony, lock, stock, and barrel.

In connection with de-Nazification in the American zone, let us view the case of Professor Doctor Otto Diettmar, chief of the orthopedic clinic of Schlierbach and professor of orthopedics at Heidelberg University. Diettmar was one of the several hundred professors and doctors ousted from the university and relegated to manual labor. However, he is among the very few who are actually engaged in labor. Most of the profs and docs are just killing time by taking walks, although one or two are known to be driving trucks.

Diettmar is working at Merkel's salon, a small institute next to the Europa that specializes in violet-ray lamps, massages, and orthopedic gadgets. If you want a pedicure or a light massage over the ankle, the professor will oblige. In the back of the salon he also has a little workshop where he hammers out arch supports and the like.

On top of everything else, he joined the party in 1933—out of conviction. "It was a time of great optimism and idealism," he reminisces. "The new government held great promise, and at first we saw nothing but the good side."

HE joined the SA. and taught a weekly class of rudimentary medicine and first aid in that organization. He never got further than the rank of sergeant in the SA., otherwise he would be classed an automatic arrest instead of a mandatory removal and would now be in an internment camp. Whether or not he managed to inject the Nazi ideology into his lectures on orthopedic therapy is not known, though it is quite possible. Many of the professors did.

Diettmar regards his present circumstance more from a medical than from a political point of view. Thus, as a punishment, there is no doubt that his removal from his profession is the severest that could have been meted out. His removal from the university was of no particular concern to him, as he was never greatly interested in teaching. The rub is that he can't practice, particularly now, when the need for doctors and specialists is so great.

There is, inevitably, a black market in professional services. All professional men have perforce a large circle of acquaintances, clients or patients. And, as is common the world over, the professional man was usually well liked and respected by his particular circle, otherwise he wouldn't have gotten anywhere in his profession in the first place. And so it is inevitable that when Frau Schmitte's children need a doctor, she is going to forget all about rules and regulations and rush around the corner to Dr. Feldwebel's back door. And, if he's any doctor at all, he will answer the call. This situation is bound to continue until the present chaos dies down; until the hectic struggle for personal survival subsides into a slightly more secure and regulated state, and until the former professional man can be adequately replaced. It all takes time. The gap is great and will be difficult to fill, inasmuch as about 75 or 80 per cent of civil servants, including teachers and professors, have been ousted, and approximately 40 per cent of professional and business people.

The percentage of party members in these groups is particularly high because of the greater amount of pressure that was brought upon them to join. This is especially true of civil servants.

Most Germans agree with the policy of punishing the Nazi leaders, because they themselves suffered greatly under the regime. But they feel that our policy doesn't discriminate sufficiently between active Nazis and people who just went along to safeguard their jobs and positions. If the entire Gestapo were lined up against a wall and shot, no German would utter a word of protest. On the contrary, they would probably cheer. But the wholesale and arbitrary sacking of whole categories of people causes the average German to wonder whether Democracy is all it has been cracked up to be. And, though no one now can be expected to hold a brief for the Germans or the German point of view, the fact remains that we are trying to sell them on the democratic idea, preferably before somebody else can sell them on the advantages of Communism, or Socialism, or some such. But when the local doctor, who was respected in his community and whose party membership was hardly even known, is suddenly deposed, the community is apt to think that the measure is designed to punish it as well as the men in question.

Recently a frantic appeal came from the Children's Klinik at Heidelberg to the local de-Nazification authorities, begging to be granted at least a couple of members of its staff, even if only on a temporary basis until new doctors could be found. The appeal mentioned that twenty children had died that week, and implied that their deaths were directly due to the lack of care caused by the destaffing of the clinic.

IN some instances consideration is given to the prevailing circumstances and temporary leniency is granted. But in most cases the directives governing a Lifebuoy operation are sufficiently rigid to make the whole process practically automatic. No matter how insignificant or important a man was in the Nazi regime, how he feels toward it now or how helpful he could be in forming a new Germany, if he was a party member he is out. The idea is to give people who didn't join up, and preferably those who suffered under the Nazis, a chance to arise and take over. But as in the end everybody suffered under the Nazis, and it now turns out that most nonparty members are either too busy with their own affairs to want the jobs vacated by party members, or are incompetent to take over positions requiring years of training and experience, a very definite problem has arisen. Nobody at present seems to be able to agree on exactly where the line should be drawn.

THE END

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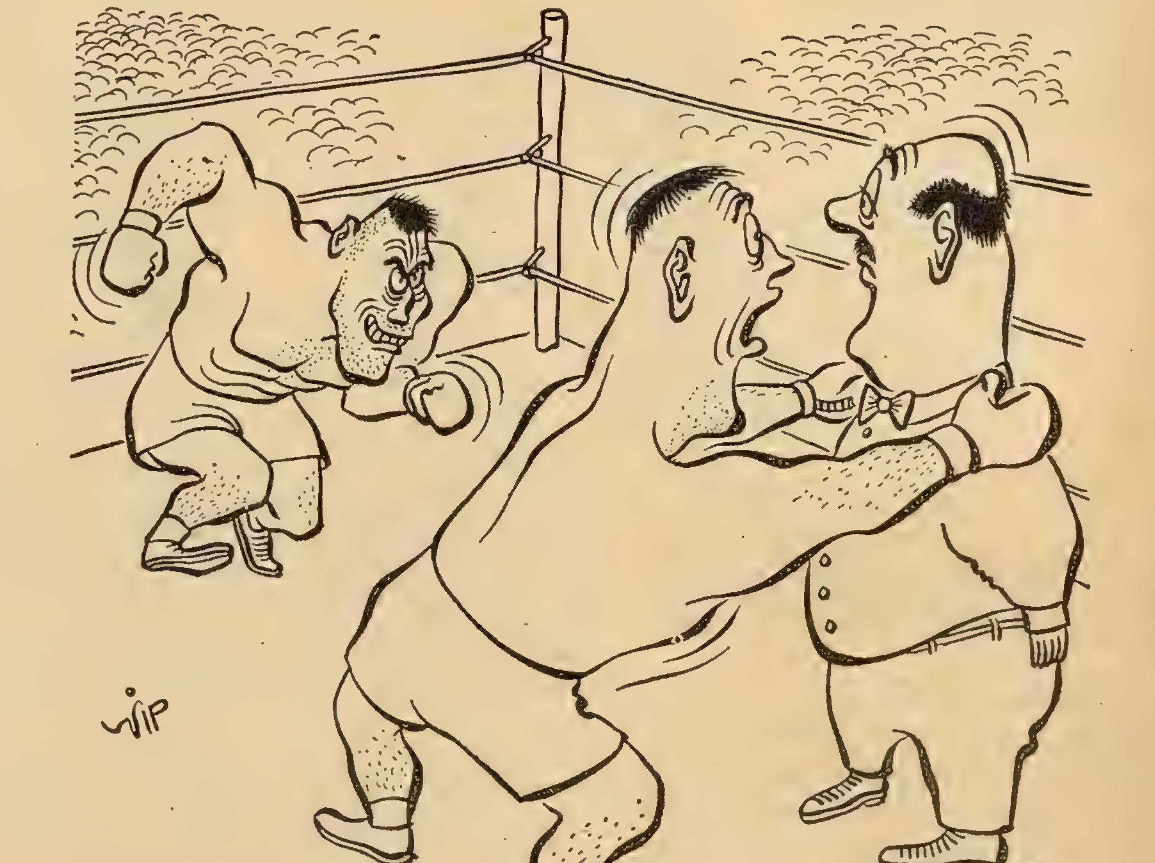

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VETERANS' Bulletin Board

BY MATT URBAN

IS the U. S. Employment Service doing right by the veteran?

This agency, charged with the human reconversion of millions of people, naturally has a tough time keeping off the fire. The revelation that more than a million and a half veterans find it more profitable to accept $20-a-week readjustment benefits instead of job placement appears to be a major indictment of USES's job-getting ability. The fact that unemployment is running about four times as high among veterans as among non-veterans also seems to reflect no credit on the agency.

Actually, however, the public is being treated to a microscopic picture of USES operations rather than the over-all scene. There are problems which enter into veteran employment which are little understood by either the general public or the veteran. Taking them all into account, USES—so far as veteran employment goes—is doing a pretty good job.

Slim pickings

That, at any rate, is the conclusion reached by your Veterans' Bulletin Board after a reasonably thorough investigation of the situation.

USES has handled the job applications of 5,858,000 veterans since November, 1940. Of these, 1,540,000 have been placed. For every three persons who have been referred to jobs by USES, two have landed jobs. This last statistic is for *all* USES job applicants; *the ratio is even better for veterans.* Employment experts point out that this record is remarkable when one considers the peculiar difficulties the USES is up against.

The high-skill jobs paying upward of $2 an hour are not being filled with veterans because of the relative scarcity of high skills in this young, industrially inexperienced group. The lower-skill jobs paying 65 cents an hour are being turned down on the grounds that veterans are just as well off—what with deductions and all—drawing that $20-a-week readjustment pay.

The probability of getting a raise after a few months, developing marketable skills, or of being in a better position to land another job while holding down one, apparently isn't registering with the vets.

Even those who are willing to accept lower-skill jobs find the pickings slim. Eighty per cent of the openings in commercial offices are for women. Employers are not disposed to alter their preference for female clerks, stenos, and secretaries.

USES is trying to raise the skill level of its veteran applicants through on-the-job-training programs, but employers have been slow to adopt these programs. Many unions shrug off apprentice training programs with such statements as "We are awaiting the return of our own union members and have no room for new workers."

Too many employers are neglecting to list their openings with USES. Perry Faulkner, chief of the Veterans Employment Agency—which helps USES in veteran placement—urges that all employers at least give the USES a try at meeting their job needs.

USES is not perfect administratively. What big organization is? Robert C. Goodwin, USES national director, admits the organization's faults. "Understaffed," he told this department, "we certainly are. And until we do get an increase in staff, a slackening of advisory functions must be expected." Mr. Goodwin agrees, too, that there have been a number of reports of inefficient counselors and means to crack down on them.

But the biggest fault, Mr. Goodwin says, lies in the fact that USES is not sufficiently well known among veterans. They don't know that they have a federal agency devoted to sizing up their abilities and finding jobs for them.

The point the Bulletin Board makes is that the USES, although understaffed and overloaded with work, has done a highly creditable job—considering the terrific obstacles to full, satisfactory employment of veterans. But it takes more than an employment agency to make a job. It takes jobs, for one thing. It also takes qualified applicants. When the skills are there and the market for the skills exists, USES has no trouble in ferreting out both the job and the applicant. When the skills are not there, USES tries, through its various programs, to develop them. What more can any employment agency—public or private—do?

* * *

Marvin Wiemer, Washington, D. C.

Good-by, Fin!

You might as well kiss that fin good-by, fella. Your ex-Navy friend could very well be entitled to 5-point preference on his Civil Service rating for service between 1926 and 1930. There were two campaign medals awarded during that period: the 2d Nicaraguan Campaign Medal and the Yangtze Service Medal.

* * *

J. S. White, Sanford, Fla. Of course, the decision is up to you, but I'd wait till I was more settled in my job before considering converting a term policy, even to Ordinary Life. At twenty-five, your term policy costs you $6.70 a month, and offers your family protection of $10,000 in case of your death. Ordinary Life will cost you $13.70 a month. If you should find this too high, you can't go back to the term policy. Why not try paying term premiums in advance for a while, at 3-per-cent discount, to see just how great a load you can afford to carry? The advance premiums can be withdrawn at your request whenever you wish. Right now you need protection. Later on, if your income warrants it, you can convert and start to consider insurance not only as protection, but as an investment.

* * *

Lt. John E. King, Fort Oglethorpe, Ga. You are right, we were wrong in our interpretation of the new reenlistment regulations. According to WD Circular 25, 1946, a man may enlist in grade held at time of discharge if the enlistment is accomplished within three months from date of discharge, and on or before June 30, 1946. On or after July 1, 1946, enlistment must be completed within twenty days from date of discharge to retain highest grade held. Sorry we blew this one, and thanks for telling us about it.

* * *

Capt. John Power, Galveston, Texas. To borrow money under provisions of the G.I. Bill, it is generally necessary to have the original copy of your discharge. However, since you are still on terminal leave and must act at once, the Veterans Administration Regional Office in your locality will furnish you with a VA Form 1870 (Certificate of Eligibility). When it is properly filled out and approved, the lending agency will honor it.

* * *

Mervin Walker, Dayton, Ohio. To get in touch with your Americal Division buddies, write to Dan Merlin, Adjutant, Americal Division, P. O. Box 15, Boston 1, Massachusetts.

* * *

A. E. Parley, Roanoke, Va. These are the things you *must* do in order to have your wife brought to America by the Army Transportation Corps: Attach a photostatic copy of both sides of your discharge papers to a letter of request to the Commanding General of the theater in which your wife resides, for her transportation. The letter should contain a statement of your citizenship, date and place of marriage, your wife's full name, age, nationality and address, and destination to which she is to be sent in the United States. Also write and tell her to be sure to fill out and return promptly the questionnaire that will be sent her. After these items have been checked off, all you have to do is wait.

* * *

Mrs. Rose Godey, Portland, Oreg. The increased pension your husband is receiving during his rehabilitation training under Public Law 16 can legally be apportioned for the support of his children by a former marriage.

* * *

Maxine Kelley, Lima, Ohio. Any statement of good health which you signed at the time of your discharge from the WAC is considered legally null and void, and will not prevent your being granted a pension if you are otherwise entitled to one.

VETERANS! The Bulletin Board is *your* department, the watchdog of your interests—written and edited by a combat veteran of World War II. Make the most of it! Write in your gripes and your ideas. No names will be used without permission. Address Veterans' Bulletin Board, c/o Liberty, 37 West 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

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TORTURE TRACK

Continued from Page 23

sold for $1,500. Harroun's Marmon cost $15,000. That was nine years ago; recent progress has been just as impressive.

The major manufacturers long since have ceased to enter cars in the race, and you certainly don't want to tool along at 125 miles an hour. Why, then, is Indianapolis on Memorial Day a "must" date for their engineers and designers? The answer is easy. Racing conditions reveal defects which might not show up for thousands of miles of normal wear—defects which can cause accidents and take lives.

APART from lunatic drivers, the greatest potential accident hazard on the open road is tire failure. Even in these times of synthetic tires, blowouts are extremely rare, thanks chiefly to the experience gained at Indianapolis. Heat generated by sustained high speed is murderous on tires—and no test in the world punishes them so mercilessly as the Indianapolis race.

The manufacturers' researchists dissect every tire used or discarded in the race as painstakingly as a coroner performing an autopsy.

A ritual as important as the race itself comes on the day after the hubbub and hysteria have subsided. Racing cars with extra, slightly smaller right rear wheels take over the Speedway and keep going until a tire blows. Since the race is run counterclockwise, most of the stress and strain is thrown on that right rear tire. It usually is the first to go, and when it does, the extra wheel theoretically brings the driver back to the pits right side up for a critical examination of the blowout.

In the early 1920s, when the first experiments were being made with balloon tires, the driver who hoped to walk away from his car at the end of the day's chore changed all tires at least three times during the race. By 1936 men were completing the 500 miles without a single change. Blowouts have been responsible for more crack-ups in competition than perhaps any other cause; from habit, most veteran drivers still go through a race with a swivel in their necks, looking for that telltale streak of white which appears when the tread wears through to the breaker strip.

Although nothing was said about it at the time, the experience gained through the years at Indianapolis licked a serious problem early in the war. When America's air-training program went into high gear, fast fighter planes were cracking up in landings at an alarming rate. The trouble was traced directly to tire failure. Army experts tried several tires, but the crack-ups continued, cutting deeply into our plane pool, our slender stock pile of natural rubber, and, most important, our pilot personnel. An alert gent in the Air Corps, a racing fan, had a bright idea. He put in a hurry call for the records compiled at Indianapolis. From what they showed, tire specialists designed a new Speedway-type tire and the incidence of landing accidents dropped abruptly.

The prize money put on the line at Indianapolis, approximately $100,000, is an exciting challenge to the daring and ingenuity of the drivers and their mechanics. Daring and skill are worth an elegant pay-off of about $35,000 to the first car—$20,000 from the management, $100 for each of the 200 laps led, plus emoluments from commercial companies for accessories used. But whoever wins, the ordinary car owner capitalizes handsomely on the ingenuity and inventiveness of the men who shoot for the big money.

More than half of the races in the series have been decided by less than two and a half minutes. In eight races less than one minute separated the winner and runner-up. Wilbur Shaw, the only three-time winner except for Lou Meyer, really split hairs with a pin in 1937, his first victory, when he led Ralph Hepburn to the wire by 2.16 seconds. Thus the importance of half a second gained or lost on each of the 200 laps is a constant spur to designers, drivers, and mechanics. And any radical improvement achieved by catch-as-catch-can tinkering or backbreaking experimentation may remain a trade secret until the race, but immediately thereafter it is passed on to the general public.

GAS and oil consumption, the average car owner's major anticipated item of expense, is a typical case in point. After the 1933 race, when Lou Meyer set a new record of 104.16 m.p.h., the Speedway contest board feared that any more speed would be too dangerous for the drivers. Accordingly, it established a limit of forty-five gallons of gas for each car in the whimsical hope that the boys, forced to conserve fuel, would ease up on the accelerator.

The drivers screamed persecution, and predicted that not one car would finish; normal gas consumption for the race had been about sixty gallons. But the contest board stood its ground and the boys went to work, doing mysterious things with carburetors, pistons, and pumps and blending special mixtures of gas which they hoped would give them increased mileage. What happened? Only one car in the 1934 race went dry and Bill Cummings set a new record of 104.86 m.p.h.

The gas limit was dropped to forty-two and a half gallons in 1935. More moaning and clutching at fevered brows. Some of the boys even chilled their gas to contract it and so squeeze in a few extra pints. So Kelly Petillo boosted the record to 106.24 and no driver had to walk home. Another cut, to thirty-seven and a half gallons, was made in 1936. Nobody liked it, but nobody ran dry, and Meyer pushed the record to 109.06 m.p.h. The monstrous beetles at Indianapolis were getting the same mileage to the gallon as a stock car in city traffic, an achievement which will ultimately benefit the public.

In this year's race all restrictions on gas have been lifted, but a joker in the rules guarantees further research: the car must carry its entire store of gas with it from the start. Since gas weighs eight pounds to the gallon and surplus weight reduces speed, it requires little imagination to guess what the drivers

Thanks for the Memory

THIS is George Herman Ruth as a Red Sox pitcher in 1919. The colorful Babe made lots of records during his twenty-one years in the majors. Still tops are these: lifetime home runs, 729, sixty in one season, sixteen with the bases loaded. His income for these years was well over $1,000,000 and his drawing power built the Yankee Stadium. Today, at fifty-two, he lives a quiet domestic life with Mrs. Ruth in New York City—which is only natural for a guy who always believed there was no base like home.
—*Allan H. Witwer.*

and their grease-monkey handmaidens will do on Memorial Day. They'll try, of course, to get the maximum mileage. You'll be cashing in presently on the results.

Much the same story can be told of experiments in oil. In 1934, when gas restrictions were first imposed, each car was allotted only six and a half gallons of oil. In a sense, it was a more drastic cut than the gas quota, for average consumption in the race was more than eighteen gallons and it had been known to go as high as fifty-five. It was primarily a safety measure, for Billy Arnold, in running away with the 1930 race, had used thirty gallons of oil, but most of it dripped through a loose motor and made the brick course slippery and treacherous. Again there were anguished outcries that the race would be turned into a farce with every car running out of oil. Again the mechanics ripped apart the motors, studied lubricating systems and tightened every oil seal and gasket. The fruits of their labors are sweet every mile you drive.

THE Speedway tradition of mechanical progress was founded in the opening race, when Ray Harroun, the winner, came up with the first rear-view mirror. All racing cars thirty-five years ago were two-seaters; the driver had to carry a mechanic to pump oil, keep an eye on the tires, and, most importantly, watch traffic behind to warn the driver when his position was threatened. Harroun turned up in a single-seat job to eliminate the extra weight and width of the mechanic. The other drivers hollered blue murder, claiming that a car without a backward seeing eye was a menace. To pipe down the yelping, Harroun attached a mirror. They're in universal use today.

Speed is the magnet that draws the mob on Memorial Day, but it is only of academic interest, useful for eye-catching publicity, to the sponsors of the show. By banking the turns more steeply, the present record of 117.20 m.p.h. made in 1938 by Floyd Roberts—who was killed in the race the following year—could be pushed up to 150 m.p.h. without too much difficulty. But the original characteristics of the track have been kept for a specific purpose. It's actually a rectangle with curved corners, and the two straightaways at the ends are only an eighth of a mile long. More than most tracks, it demands repeated acceleration and braking which exaggerate conditions encountered in ordinary driving.

The Speedway, like its products, has come a long way since 1909, when it was built by Carl Fisher, Jim Allen, and A. C. Newby, who made their money in Prest-O-Lite headlights. They conceived of the race as a public-relations job to convince a skeptical public that the automobile was a permanent addition to the American landscape,

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Kerkling & Company, Burbank, California

and in the early years only stock or semistock cars competed. The location of the track was not accidental. Indianapolis, not Detroit, then was the center of the industry and more than a dozen cars were manufactured there.

Tremendous public interest immediately established the race as a fixture on the sporting calendar—and almost as quickly changed its nature. The annual affair posed a delicate problem for the major manufacturers. It was great to win the race and splash the company's product all over the newspapers, but failure meant a withering loss of prestige. The invasion of European machines and drivers, attracted by the rich prizes, and the trend toward domestic jobs designed especially for the Speedway impelled the big companies to bow out.

FEW men who specialize in building cars for Indianapolis are wealthy enough to go into it merely as a hobby or because they want to get their names in the papers. It's their living—and the odds are discouragingly high. To put an entry into the race costs about $10,000; and unless it finishes among the first five—there usually are thirty-three starters—the backer loses money.

Nor are unlimited resources any guaranty of victory. There is the classic example of Cliff Durant, son of the former General Motors magnate, who poured $100,000 into his Detroit Special in the late 1920s. Tommy Milton, a two-time winner, designed the car, and Durant spared no expense building it. Entered twice, it failed to finish on both occasions, and Durant unloaded it to Harry Hartz for $5,000. Hartz tinkered with the thing, made some fundamental adjustments, and Fred Frame drove it first across the line in 1932.

A man must be good and lucky—but mainly lucky—to win at Indianapolis. Ralph DePalma, now sixty-three, probably was as skillful a driver as ever sat behind a wheel. In twenty-six years on the big-time circuit, he competed in 2,889 races and won an incredible 2,757. He was the first man to hit 150 miles an hour at Daytona Beach, the first to push the speedometer above 100 at Indianapolis, where he drove 4,061 miles without an accident. Good as he was, DePalma won the big race only once, in 1915. Heartbreaking mechanical failures cost him at least four other first prizes. In 1912 he had a twenty-two-mile lead with only five to go, when a bearing let go. He was out in front in 1919 by five miles, within twenty-five of the finish, when a broken valve spring sent him to the pit. He spent forty-five minutes changing the spring and still finished sixth. Again, in 1921, he was leading by five miles with only twenty-five remaining when his motor threw a connecting rod. And in 1922, with the same lead at the same stage of the race, ignition trouble forced him to halve his speed and limp home in fourth place.

Months before the field lines up on Memorial Day, men with magic in their fingers labor in the shops, where the races are won and lost. Engines are torn down and reassembled a dozen times before the boss mechanic gives his O.K. The incessant poking, puttering, and tinkering accomplish more than mere speed; they have helped to eliminate the bugs that had confounded physicists and engineers.

"Those boys have enabled the manufacturers to turn out good cars—almost as good as the ads read," DePalma says laconically.

One important advance made in the last quarter century was the development of the straight-eight engine, strictly a Hoosier product. Engineers said you couldn't line up nine main bearings required for such a job, and it would thrash itself apart. Fred and August Duesenberg, who made their reputation on the Speedway, dissented vigorously and produced such an engine in 1919. Jimmy Murphy drove the straight-eight machine in the 1921 race and broke down after 107 laps. The Duesenbergs took it back to the shop, worked for a year—and Murphy won in '22 with the same car, then went to Europe and captured the French Grand Prix.

A high-lighted history of the automotive industry could be told in terms of its search for small light motors with the power of a larger engine—and of the Speedway's revolutionary research. The three Chevrolet brothers, Louis, Arthur, and Gaston, became famous in America when Gaston won the 1920 race with the smallest efficient engine yet seen that could be turned out by mass-production methods. Harroun's 1911 Marmon had a piston displacement of 600 cubic inches. A decade later the ceiling was 183, and it gradually was lowered until it hit rock bottom in '29 at 91½ cubic inches, or half the size of the Model T Ford engine. All this technical business means, in words of one syllable, that an engine less than one sixth the size of its grandfather produced seven times as much power on less fuel. Indianapolis showed the manufacturers how to make lighter, faster, safer, and cheaper cars. It has also produced foolproof spark plugs, the demountable wheel now in common use, and a host of other improvements.

ANOTHER Indianapolis innovation that should be more familiar to you is the Magnaflux process, a magic-eye device which detects structural weakness in any critical part of a car. The first year it was introduced at the Speedway, in 1936, 28 per cent of the cars entered were rejected until the exposed weaknesses were corrected.

Yet Ted Allen, former secretary of the American Automobile Association's contest board, believes Indianapolis' most vital contribution to safety has not yet been explored.

"If every state were as concerned with safety as the Speedway, our accident record would not be a national disgrace," Allen says. "Although every driver in the big race is an expert, he must pass a stiffer road test than any state requires. That Magnaflux check should be mandatory for every car on the road at six-month intervals.

"Cars today are just about as safe mechanically as they ever will be, but more people than ever are being killed and maimed by incompetent driving. The big problem is coping with man-failure at the wheel. It can be done by copying the precautions taken on the Speedway."

THE END

CITY EDITOR

"Stop the presses!"

LIBERTY

LIBERTY GOES TO THE MOVIES

WITH HELEN PARKER

Detective (Mark Stevens) and secretary (Lucille Ball) spend a busman's holiday.

THE DARK CORNER

(Twentieth Century-Fox) Lucille Ball, Mark Stevens, Clifton Webb, Kurt Kreuger, Cathy Downs

IN this one, the snooty Clifton Webb is seen as a Park Avenue art dealer who blandly insults dowagers as he sells them fabulously priced paintings. His own favorite art object is his beautiful wife. She is twenty years or so younger than he. Her favorite pastime seems to be sneaking kisses in the gallery with a smooth blond weasel (Kurt Kreuger) who appears to make his living from valuable paintings he has extorted from married ladies. (Nomination for the most fantastic dialogue of the year: a lady corners Kreuger into the library and whispers out of the corner of her mouth, "Did you get my Van Gogh?")

The picture is really an allegory—in which virtue is pitted against evil, represented by Webb, wife, and cronies. Not the least of the cronies is Bill Bendix, whom Webb has hired for some of his dirtier work. Bendix, however, is pushed out of a skyscraper window by his employer, sparing him the necessity of spending his old age in prison.

On the side of good are a private detective (Mark Stevens) and his bright, beautiful secretary (Lucille Ball). Theirs is the dark corner, with an elegant frame designed by Mr. Webb—the extraordinarily jealous husband who wants his wife's lover's murder weapon to be found in Stevens' mitt.

But dark corners, it seems, have something in common with clouds—a silver lining. And good, as often as not, triumphs over evil. So the scintillating Mr. Webb gets put on ice in his own vault, while the Tristan and Iseult of the detective business beat it down to City Hall for a wedding license.

As a plot, it's rather hackneyed (Dumas did it a long time ago), but as a production it's very craftsmanlike. Some witty lines, some very good acting—and even, just for a change, Miss Ball in some clothes that a secretary might actually wear. Mark Stevens (who was swiftly borrowed by RKO for From This Day Forward after they'd seen him in The Dark Corner) is mightily talented, with a touch of winsomeness that might remind you of the early Lew Ayres. All in all, things look pretty bright in The Dark Corner.

The impeccable, unruffled Mr. Webb.

SCANDAL IN PARIS

(Pressburger, through United Artists)
George Sanders, Signe Hasso, Carole Landis, Akim Tamiroff

EUGENE FRANÇOIS VIDOCQ was born in a French jail in 1776, spent much of his youth in prison, and finally became so proficient in the ways of the underworld that he was made police chief of Paris. Fortunately, he was so fascinated by his career that he wrote his memoirs (slightly fictionalized) and we can now trace his mercurial progress in the new film called Scandal in Paris.

George Sanders is a perfect choice for the witty scapegrace who can pose for a church mural of St. George in one scene, and steal a jeweled garter while kissing Carole Landis in the next. Playing opposite him, but awestruck in admiration of his every posture, is Signe Hasso. She plays the convent-bred daughter of the Minister of Police. Her faith in the St. George facet of his character sustains her even when she knows that he and his ugly companion (Akim Tamiroff—*he* poses as the dragon in the mural) are engaged in stealing all her grandmother's jewels. It is this faith that causes M. Vidocq (a noble name that he has borrowed from a tombstone) to "discover" the hiding place of the gems, to let himself be appointed chief of police, and eventually be led down the straight and narrow bridal path with his boss's daughter.

St. George and the Sleeping Beauty.

It's a gay and exciting adventure, with a titivating slice of melodrama furnished by Gene Lockhart as the former chief of police and husband of Miss Landis, who drives himself to madness, then murder, through the notion that he is being cuckolded. Lockhart hasn't had such a good chance since Algiers, and he again shows his mettle.

Direction, by Douglas Sirk, is most intelligent, even to the point of persuading Carole Landis to go beyond her usual "Look at me—ain't I pretty?" style. Then there's a whole string of delightful shady characters, represented as Tamiroff's relatives, of whom the most outstanding is his Aunt Ernestine (Gisella Werbiseck, a really rich old character actress).

Someone snatched the Landis garter.

"Amusing" is a word that can be loosely applied, especially to other people's errors, but Scandal in Paris is amusing in its strictest and purest sense. Applause goes to Ellis St. Joseph for the screen play, and to George Sanders and Signe Hasso for two very fine jobs.

THE OUTLAW *(United Artists)*

Jane Russell, Jack Beutel, Walter Huston, Thomas Mitchell

AFTER five long years during which the world was largely preoccupied with other matters, it has finally been decided that Mr. Howard Hughes' production, The Outlaw, should be released.

What with all the commotion about whether a certain lady's chest measurement was within the law, what the picture is all about has never been made quite clear. Now it can be told. It's about Billy the Kid, and another striking amateur named Jack Beutel was engaged to portray the role.

Young Beutel, with his pristine innocence, manages to convince as the lad who just couldn't resist playing with guns. La Russell, the dream girl of the California Chamber of Commerce, is cast as his half-breed sweetheart, and doesn't actually do very much besides stand by a fence rail and pout.

Walter Huston and Thomas Mitchell, a patently excellent pair of actors who must be rather embarrassed by all this to-do, are seen as a couple of renegades in a pretty unhealthy relationship, but perform with great good will. But the sad fact remains that the tempest of The Outlaw spends itself in a dull and colorless teapot.

PICTURES WORTH SEEING

THE GREEN YEARS (M-G-M). Sweet sentiment in a Scottish village. Charles Coburn, Dean Stockwell, and a fine supporting cast.

A NIGHT IN CASABLANCA (United Artists). The long-awaited Marx Brothers' picture and well worth waiting for.

THE CAT THAT WENT TO CHURCH

Continued from Page 36

two weeks. Richard wants to go to the Springs."

"And I'll bet you'd rather go fishing or off in the woods some place," Thad remarked.

"How'd you know? You must be psychic."

"You just don't act like the Springs type. You know, horseback riding at nine, shuffleboard at twelve, luncheon at one, and golf at three."

While Thad determinedly kept his tone light, he had an all-gone feeling inside. A lot of half-formed ideas had been buzzing around in his head, and he realized now that Abby had been the center of all of them.

There was a knock at the kitchen door and Abby got up. The kid Thad had met on the stairs was waiting, twirling his old felt hat cut in the shape of a crown.

"Come on in, Charlie," the girl said warmly. "Charlie, this is Mr. Miller—Thad Miller. Thad, this is Charlie Johnson—a good friend of mine who lives in the building."

"I guess I ain't such a good friend o' yours as you think, Miss Abby." The boy was so pale every freckle seemed about to pop right out of his face.

"What do you mean? We've always been pals, haven't we?"

"Oh, sure, but I double-crossed you. You know when Jinx ran away?"

"Yes, why?"

"Well, he didden run away at all. I took him. I put him in a carton an' got on a streetcar an' let him out way on the other side o' town. I didden think I'd ever see him again."

"Whatever made you do a thing like that? I thought you liked Jinx."

She looked as if she were going to cry.

"I do, Miss Abby, an' it wasn't my idea. But Mister Grant gimme two dollars to do the job, an' I did it. Only, he wanted me to dump him in the river. I couldn't do that to no cat, specially Jinx."

"I just can't believe Richard would do a thing like that," Abby said. "He's always said he was fond of Jinx."

"Looky, Miss Abby," Charlie said. "I wanna give that two dollars back. I'll collect old bottles an' save my 'lowance. I feel like a dirty dog."

Tears sparkled in Abby's eyes, and Charlie, after one terrified look, slid out the door.

THAD didn't know how it happened, but a moment later Abby was in his arms, her small body shaken by sobs as he awkwardly smoothed her hair and murmured unintelligible phrases of consolation.

Even as he thrilled to her closeness, he told himself there was nothing personal about the gesture so far as Abby was concerned.

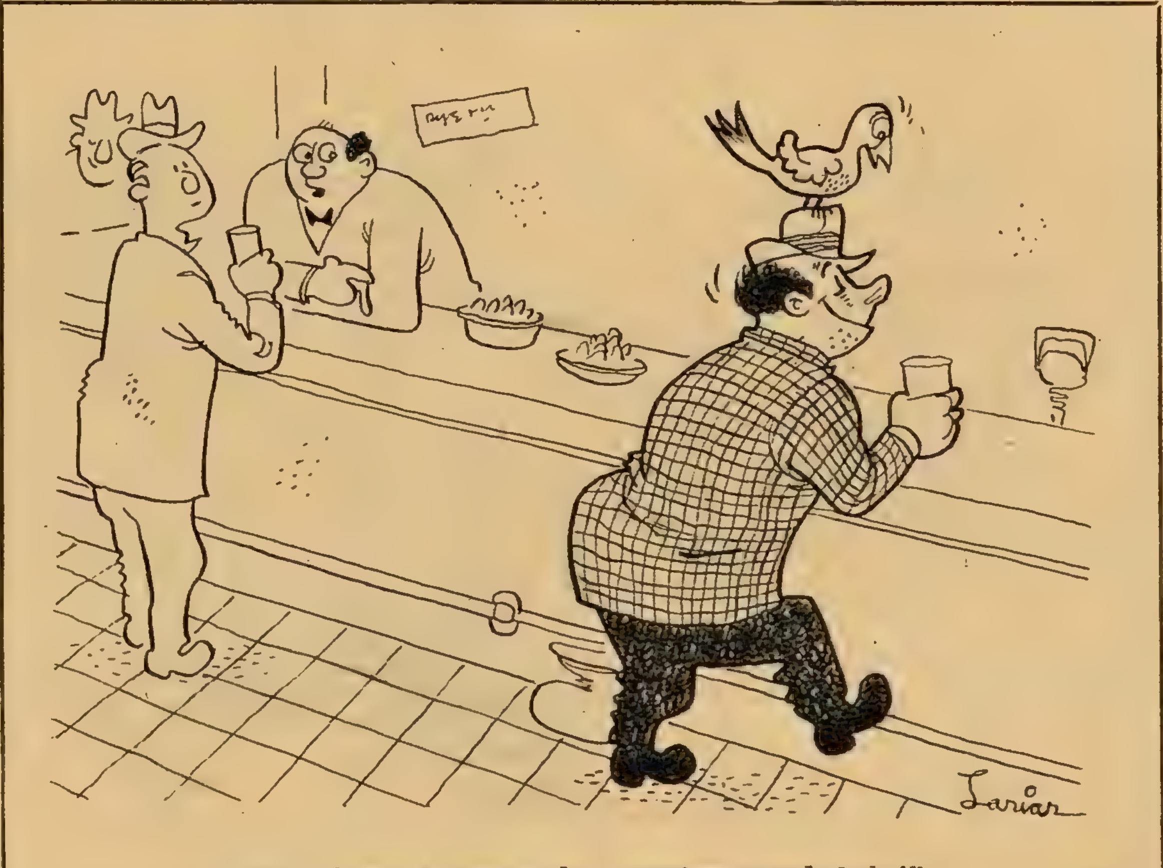
She just needs a shoulder to cry on, and I happen to be handy, he thought.

After a short time she looked up. "People are so different from what you think they are, Thad," she whimpered. "Here I thought I had Richard carded and catalogued, and now I discover I don't know him at all. Why do things like that happen?"

"I don't know," he answered. "It—it happened to me, too!"

Eloise had suddenly seemed different, too. The scene she had put on at the church had revealed a side of her character that he'd never dreamed of.

Abby was still in his arms when the phone bell shrilled. Both started guiltily and Abby backed away.



"It's a homing pigeon—he sometimes needs help!"

LIBERTY

"Would you answer it, please?" she asked.

It was Richard Grant, and Thad thought he seemed a bit annoyed. But Abby didn't want to come to the phone.

"Tell him to come right over—I want to talk to him," she directed. Thad passed on the information and hung up.

"I'm going to put off the wedding till I think this out," she said. "I want to be honest with Richard, so I must have his side of the story. Perhaps he can explain bribing Charlie."

Thad realized that he had to be honest, too, for he suddenly knew that he wasn't going to marry Eloise.

"I've got some unfinished business myself," he told Abby. "Suppose I come back here about three o'clock and we talk things over together. Seems to me we have quite a few things in common. O.K.?"

"I'll be here."

HE went straight to the Stantons', determined to have it out with Eloise. The house was in a turmoil. Florists and caterers were getting in one another's way. Mr. Stanton had a harried expression.

"Where's Eloise?" Thad demanded. "I've got to see her."

"You can't, my boy—the hairdresser and her mother are with her. I have to try to keep all these crazy people from tearing one another apart." He waved his hands helplessly at the confusion. "I thought for a minute you'd run out — er — changed your mind. Now everything's going to be swell."

"You might as well call all this off," Thad said resolutely. "I've decided that Eloise and I have made a mistake, and the only honorable thing to do is say so before it's too late."

"You don't know what you're saying," Stanton said desperately. "Let's get out of this madhouse and talk it over quietly."

He led the way up to his den and poured two slugs of bourbon.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Stanton, but I can't go through with—" Thad started, when the older man interrupted.

"You've never seen my darkroom, have you? Photography's my hobby, you know. Come on and I'll show you."

He took Thad's arm and propelled him to the other side of the room. There was a smart push, the slam of a door, the click of a key in the lock.

"Trapped!" Thad muttered bitterly. "I should've used the phone."

"Now," Stanton called through the door, "we can talk sensibly. You're just nervous and upset—you'll feel fine once you and Eloise are married."

"I don't want to marry her—I won't marry her!" Thad shouted desperately. "Let me out of here!"

"Not till you say you'll do the right thing by my daughter," Stanton yelled back. There was silence then, and Thad inspected his prison. By lighting a match he found a red bulb over a pan of developer and pulled it on. There was no outlet except the locked door. He went to the door and banged against it with his fist.

"Let me out, you—you kidnaper!" he cried.

He was startled to hear Mrs. Stanton's voice.

"Thaddeus," she said commandingly, "you're being utterly ridiculous. What will our friends say, if they hear of this?"

"Thad?" It was Eloise's voice this time. "Can you hear me?"

"Yes, I can hear you and you can hear me. Unlock that door!"

"Listen, Thad. I'm awfully sorry for what happened yesterday. I always get like that when a black cat crosses my path. You'll just have to get used to my nerves. They're so delicate—"

"But I don't want to marry you, Eloise," he yelled. He would have preferred to tell her quietly, without an audience, but he had no choice.

"Perhaps we *have* made a mistake." Eloise's voice came faintly through the panel. "We can discuss that later. I just can't face my friends ever again if the wedding is called off two days in a row. We can talk it all out on our honeymoon, but you can't do this to me now. Please!"

"Thad!" Bill was outside the door, too. "You're acting like a fool! You can't put the Stantons in this position! The marriage must go on!"

"Marry her yourself then, you big bimbo!"

Thad was suddenly conscious of a shortness of breath. There was little air in the darkroom and he was wringing wet. "Let me out!" he shouted. "I'm smothering!"

"Not till you agree to be sensible!" Bill answered. "The orchestra's here already and the minister will arrive in a few minutes."

Thad looked at his watch under the glare of the red light. It was after two thirty and he had promised to be at Abby's at three.

"O.K.," he gave in.

He staggered out of the room, blinking at the sunlight streaming through the windows. Everyone had cleared out but Bill. He went to the door of the den, but it was locked. He was still a prisoner.

"All right," Bill directed. "Hop in the bathroom there and clean up. We haven't got much time."

Thad went into the bathroom. He grinned as he locked the door, pushed up the bathroom window, and looked out.

It was the second floor, but there was a trellis with heavy ivy climbing up the side of the house.

"I may break my neck, but it's worth the chance," he said.

He reached the ground with only a few minor scratches and ran for

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his car. It was after three when he skidded to a stop in front of Abby's and ran up the stairs. There was no answer to his knock, but he could hear Jinx mewing inside.

Further pounding finally brought a woman who lived across the hall to her door.

"Do you know what has happened to Miss Rhodes?" he asked. "I was to meet her at three, but I was detained."

"She left about half an hour ago," the woman answered. "She was with Mr. Grant, wearing a green suit and she had three orchids on her jacket."

"Thanks," he muttered, and stumbled slowly down the steps. He had counted on Abby standing by her word, and here she had gone and married Grant after all.

"Well, that finishes it," he sighed as he climbed into his car. "I'm off women for life." But he knew he'd never forget Abby.

Just as he was shifting gears, he looked up. Charlie Johnson was racing toward him, yelling.

"Gosh, Mr. Miller," he panted, "I'm glad I caught you! Miss Abby just phoned me to see if I could find you. She wants you to meet her at Third and Cedar right away."

"Yippee!" Thad yelled, and reached in his pocket and produced a bill. "Here, Charlie," he said. "Buy yourself a soda."

A chorus of indignant horns marked Thad's rapid progress down the street. If there were red lights or boulevard stops, he never saw them.

THERE were only two words spoken as he leaped out of his car at Third and Cedar and swept a small girl in a green suit into his arms. Three orchids were crushed.

"Abby!"

"Thad!"

Apparently that was enough, for he was kissing her and she was responding enthusiastically. Both acted as if they hadn't seen each other for a long time.

"I was afraid you'd changed your mind," he said, when they were in the car.

"It took some doing to ditch Richard," she answered. "The only way I could finally get him out of my place was by putting on my wedding outfit and pinning on his orchids. Then I got him to stop the car by saying I'd forgotten to call the man to come for Jinx. I went into a drugstore and out the side door and thumbed a ride to where you met me. Richard's probably scouring the town for me—he just won't believe that I don't want to marry him."

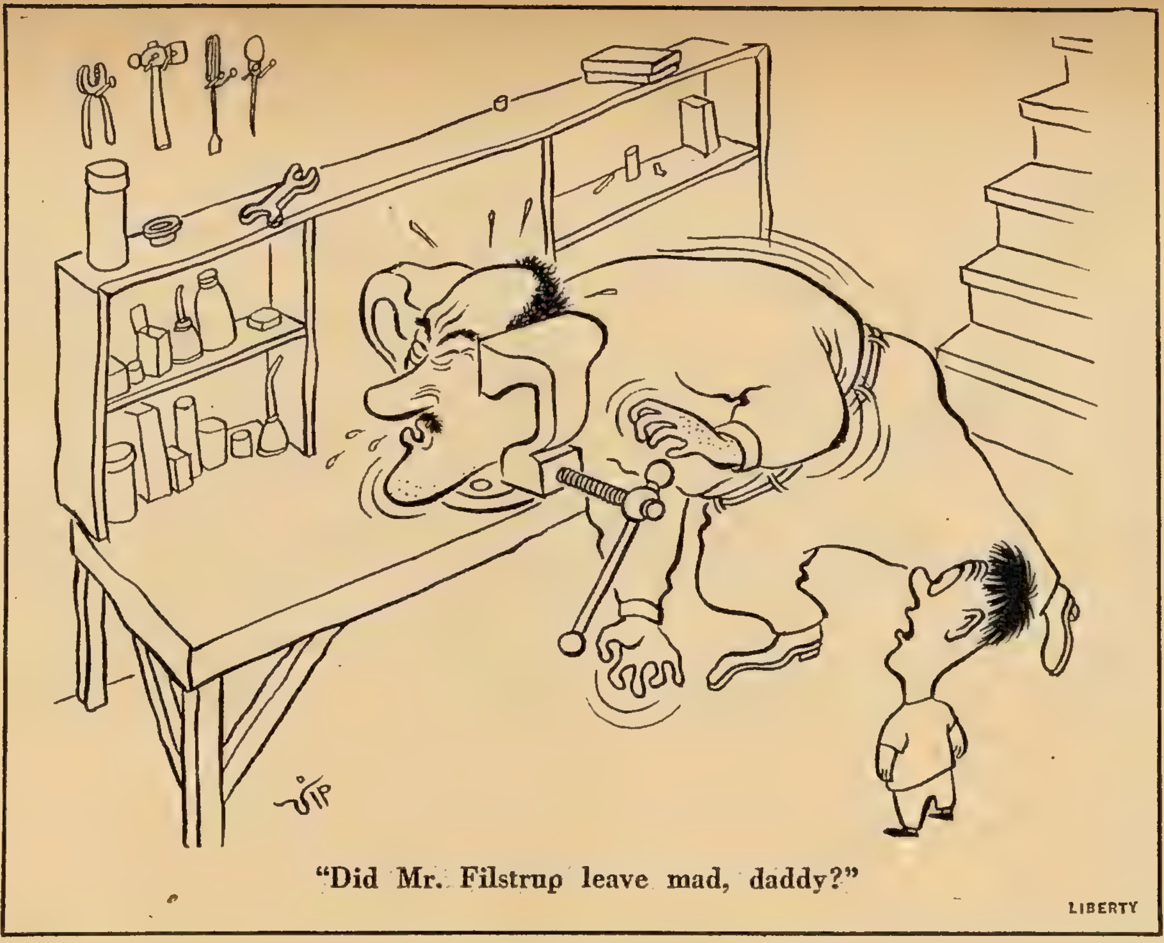
"I had trouble with Eloise that way, too."

"Eloise? Who's she?"

"She's the gal Jinx saved me from."

"And some folks think black cats bring bad luck," Abby said as she moved closer to Thad.

THE END



"Did Mr. Filstrup leave mad, daddy?"

LIBERTY

WHY BRITAIN HATES HOLLYWOOD

Continued from Page 21

of idolatry of British films, which is only human—for a Britisher. But it is obvious that all are exerting pressure daily to force a definite change in public opinion.

One trade official told me that a few years ago no circuit on this side of the Atlantic would dare book a British film for more than a week. It would simply be bad box office. Yet today British films play for six weeks in some first-run theaters and, at times, there are a half a dozen or so first-run domestic films here.

What's more, a trade paper, estimating that $1,200,000 is the absolute tops for box-office "take" in Great Britain for any film, reports that for the first time in history, British films are reaching that point. The Seventh Veil, a low-cost "melo," now being shown in the United States, even went beyond it, while heavily advertised Hollywood epics played to half-filled houses.

Despite the prejudice against U. S. films in some circles, there are still Britishers, however, who have to be coaxed to see an English-made film, even at this late date. The memory of many British "lemons" still persists, to the detriment of the crusade against Hollywood.

But when the critics pan American-made movies, they are merely expressing a resentment which is felt by many British moviegoers. And in other instances they are making capital out of ridiculous movie situations, speeches, plots, *et al.* To attempt to cram a picture like Objective Burma down British throats certainly was not calculated to win a prize for international friendship. Perhaps the movie tycoons don't read the papers and never knew that British boys were dying daily in Burma. And to tell the British via the screen that it was Errol Flynn, singlehanded, and not their Fourteenth Army, who was saving Burma from the Japs was enough to make any Britisher see red. Objective Burma was quickly withdrawn from Warners' Leicester Square Theater in London, but the wonder was that it was ever shown at all.

It is precisely this cinematic frame of mind to which more and more people are objecting. One politician in the Midlands of England told me, "I hate movies with no story to them, particularly those which present a misconception of United States life. I read my papers and I refuse to believe that the United States is Utopia itself, with no cares or problems of any kind."

IN any conversation with Americans, Britishers like to point out that they consider themselves much more mature. There also is a decided tendency to hoot at "war sacrifices" of Americans in terms of loss of maids, insufficient gasoline, etc. They are fully convinced that compared with their sacrifice, America scarcely felt the searing breath of World War II, and many Hollywood films they've seen are grist for this type of mill.

The American outlook on sex is, at times, considered downright obscene by some Britishers. Shirley Temple's Kiss and Tell was described as a "nasty, sniggering little comedy" and was definitely an ordinary money-maker, irrespective of how it fared in the United States. It should be noted that the British have no use for precocious children and there is no precocious child star in British films. Miss Temple was very popular here indeed, but business men lined up with shopgirls in expressing their disapproval of casting Shirley in so precocious a role.

Another critic hoots at the tendency of the movies to "denature vice" and "the virtuous pretense that wrongdoing fails to pay—doesn't get you the girl in the last reel." This was in reference to Whistle Stop with George Raft. As an indication of the British demand for more realism in films, there is the almost unanimous acclaim awarded to Scarlet Street with Edward G. Robinson, for its "highly sensible viewpoint." Contrast between Whistle Stop and Scarlet Street is remarked upon here as a sign of Hollywood's growing up.

The "biological joke" of giving wolf cries at sight of an attractive girl is a sore point in England and another example of how British taste differs from ours. Britishers refuse to take much stock in films wherein to be a "wolf" about girls is to be a smart fellow.

The Sunday Times feels that "if one is to judge by the average American film, a blonde, a natty apartment with bedside lamps and a weekly pass to the movies—or, alternatively, a brunette, a house with front gate and back porch, and snowballing at Christmas—constitute the sum of human endeavor."

THE type of Hollywood movie that pictures Americans as a race of buffoons is costing us many supporters and is ruining the British market for U. S. films. The "soppy" (British slang for mushy) stuff just won't pay off much longer.

Another angle in the movie situation in Britain is the deal recently made by the J. Arthur Rank combine with the major Irish exhibition circuits. The new United World Pictures set-up is one more design in the pattern. In effect, J. Arthur Rank, who controls the bulk of British film industry, has made distribution deals with producers Spitz, Goetz, and Matty Fox of Hollywood. He will distribute a specified number of their films here and they will exhibit a like number of his cinema offerings in the United States. This serves two purposes: in addition to "opening" major U. S. exhibition circuits wide to British films, both sides have the receipts of each other's films, in the event of film revenue being frozen by both governments, a remote possibility but one to be reckoned with.

The number of U. S. films shown in Britain will hardly be affected, since the English see the bulk of Hollywood's output in any case, with about 376 U. S. films shown here yearly, contrasted with sixty British-made films.

As things stand now, out-and-out comedies are sure bets to flop at the box office. Mark Ostrer, managing director of the Gaumont-British Corporation, believes that any Harold Lloyd type of film would fizzle these days. The British want human-type comedies based on everyday life.

One of the "problem children" made by the British appears to have been Caesar and Cleopatra, a Rank film, directed and produced by Gabriel Pascal. It was the premier British super-duper epic and Britain's bid for the U. S. market. The picture cost five million dollars, a sum that British movie makers would hardly shell out for a film meant only for their own circuits.

Some hold that the critics were genuinely disappointed and so heartbroken over the lack of merit of Caesar and Cleopatra that they were merciless. Certainly every critic in England quoted the cost of the film in his review. In line with this, there is a feeling in one quarter that a blunder was made in not requesting the critics to soft-pedal any adverse criticism on the grounds that this was an export item, aimed at, principally, the United States box office, regardless of British reaction.

HOWEVER, Sir Stafford Cripps came to the support of Caesar and Cleopatra in Parliament. This may be attributed to his desire to realize as many U. S. silver dollars on this extravaganza as possible, in his capacity as president of the Board of Trade.

Caesar and Cleopatra has not yet had its inning in the United States, and until it does, Rank, Cripps, and Pascal cannot be judged guilty.

Cripps was recently asked by a Conservative in Parliament whether the government had any plan for reducing dollar expenditure by stimulating British production. Sir Stafford said ". . . not only is there a plan for re-expanding British film production as a means of reducing dollar expenditure but substantial progress has been and is being made in its execution."

Note that as yet there is no direct action taken against film imports. The film war which will flare into the open must wait until British movie makers have fattened up considerably more. Propagandists may be working overtime, but the technical side of the industry is having its woes with labor and material shortages.

But the domestic titans of the cinema have tasted blood in the form of huge box-office receipts and they want a whole lot more of it. The only way we can enter the lions' den is to make a fresh evaluation of ourselves and strike out with the correct premise that the British are mature and want an intelligent presentation of American life, in keeping with American character and traditions.

An important distinction, for fairness' sake, must be made between many British exhibitors and producers. A trade official terms exhibitors "business men first, patriots

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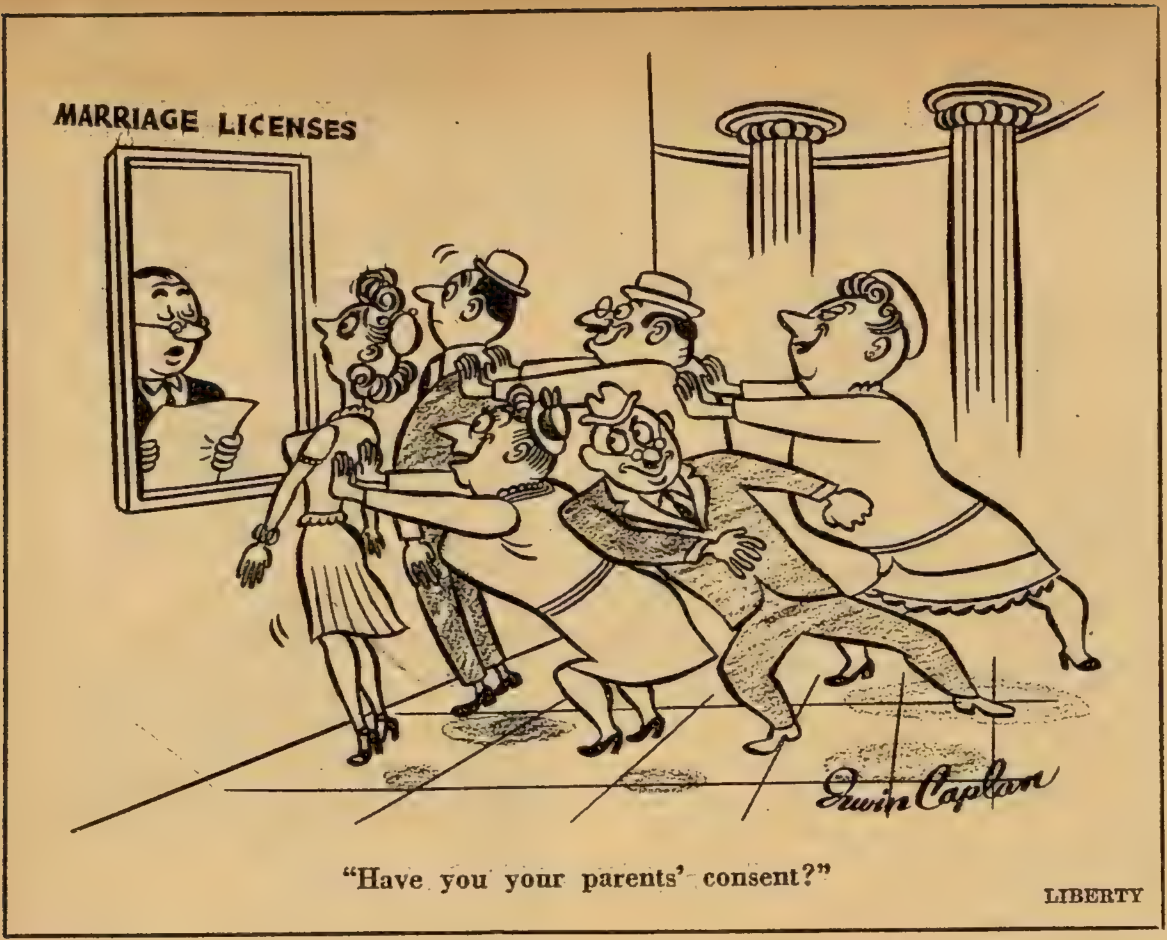

"Have you your parents' consent?"

LIBERTY

second." Their livelihood is based on filling their theaters, and as long as American films will do that, they're pro-American.

Another fact, which tends to be pooh-poohed, is that American films support British theaters. With only sixty British films made each year, a boycott of U. S. celluloid would mean closing the majority of cinemas in Great Britain. The Rank combine, with tremendous financial powers, has only forty films in production at this moment. Cutting off one's nose to spite one's face would be a pretty weak simile to describe the results if some British interests were to succeed in their announced objective—to cut down to a trickle import of U. S. films.

The British forces may never equal Hollywood's capacity for making films entertaining, but eventually, with the aid of effective propaganda and by capitalizing on every weakness of Hollywood, they'll have it down fine. They now boast that their films are a cross between the sheer entertainment of U. S. films and the strict realism of the French cinema, and have set themselves to walk along this straight and narrow line. It's up to Hollywood, if it wants to retain its supremacy, to set its sights on its highest standards.

Films as widely separated as Saratoga Trunk, Wonder Man, The Lost Weekend, and Road to Utopia packed British theaters. Objective Burma-type pictures cost us considerable prestige. The choice isn't hard to make.

Will Hollywood give this strategy a trial? The prize here is seventy million dollars a year in "take"—and don't forget that the Battle for Britain, in terms of celluloid, may mean, eventually, the battle for box offices of the world.

THE END

SOCIAL SECURITY, LIMITED

Continued from Page 19

$80 a month. But the most a single retired worker can draw today is $44 a month, and the most a man and wife can get if she is 65 or older is $66. The average payments are much lower: about $25 for the single man and about $38 for the couple.

Although the payments aren't high, often they mean the difference between keeping a home together and going to an institution. One retired worker wrote the Board that his monthly check enabled him to live in his married daughter's home with better grace: at least he didn't have to ask her for tobacco money.

If everybody now eligible for retirement made application today, the rolls would almost be doubled. Added to the 850,000 wage earners would be some 300,000 eligible wives. Checks are going out nowadays to 1,350,000 persons, more than half of them women and children.

The oldsters gave quantitative aid to the war effort. And a million jobs have been filled by those who could retire under the government's Old-Age and Survivors Insurance system or could draw old-age public assistance.

These old-timers are returning but slowly to the rolls today. As long as there's a seller's market in jobs, most of them will probably keep on working. Just when, under peace conditions, the old folks will stop work is an enigma. If the actuaries knew the average retirement age they could compute the cost of old-age insurance, but they're in the dark. It's an important question for Congress in its current task of revising the Social Security laws.

There are reasons other than the patriotic for delaying retirement. People who have worked for forty years like to keep at it. It maintains their self-respect, gives them an interest, and—most important—the old-age insurance allowances themselves aren't enough to live on.

As Arthur J. Altmeyer, chairman of the Social Security Board, once remarked, old-age insurance is not a feather bed but a safety net. The benefit rates are low enough to give plenty of impulse to thrift.

Social Security field staffs have their problems, but so do the Social Security card holders. The best way to get the regulations straight as they apply to you is to drop in at your local field office, which is usually listed in the telephone book under Social Security Board or Federal Security Agency. Every wage earner should call at a field office when he turns 65, whether or not he intends to retire right away. A wage earner's survivors should inquire there when he dies. And if you want to know the amount of wages credited to your account, write to the Social Security Board, Candler Building, Baltimore, Maryland, giving your account number, date of birth, and full name and address.

And keeping the records of millions of Social Security card holders straight is no mean task. Among other things it has led Oscar C. Pogge, director of the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Bureau, to conclude that there is no longer an uncommon name in America. To tell apart the 800,000 Smiths, the 600,000 Johnsons, and the 450,000 Browns, the Social Security account number is the first reliance. The name alone is of little value; there are twenty-one different ways to spell Snyder, and reports from employers may play all the variations. Besides, there are so many exact duplications. Your father's name, your mother's maiden name, and the date and place of your birth are other ways to distinguish you. Despite these, there are confusions.

THE bureau thought, for instance, that it must have issued two Social Security numbers to a Chicagoan with an odd name. The applications from an address in South Chicago and from another in Cicero, Illinois, were virtually alike: same first initial and last name; same father's name, same mother's name, same date of birth in same town in Czechoslovakia. But the holders denied that they were identical, and the bureau finally introduced them to each other. They were not related.

The Joneses, Millers, and Williamses are almost tied for fourth place in Social Security files. The Cohens, popular in New York City, have a hard time holding forty-second place in the national list. The Owens family is in the cellar—fiftieth place.

Sometimes applications are sent back because the worker puts down his mother's married instead of her maiden name. In one such case (we'll say it was John Clutterbuck's) the applicant returned the card with an indignant note that the entry was correct. If it was all right for a Roosevelt to marry a Roosevelt, he said, it was certainly O.K. for a Clutterbuck to marry a Clutterbuck.

The Old-Age Bureau's accounting operations are simple, but the volume is so enormous that its efficiency is a modern wonder. More than 600 electrical machines enable 4,400 employees to handle daily from 600,000 to 1,000.000 payroll items reported by employers. A collating machine, for instance, can compare the holes punched in one card with holes in another at the rate of 240 a minute. The work could not be done by hand.

Chiefly because workers move around a lot, it has been impossible to decentralize the basic records. But checks to retired people are mailed from five points: Chicago, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, and San Francisco. And individual contacts are handled by nearly 500 field offices sprinkled all over the country.

The worker meets his Social Security Board across their counters or in one of the 1,500 "itinerant stations." An itinerant station is office space in a town or village——often in the post office or United States Employment Office—which is visited at stated intervals by a representative of a field office.

Most of the field-office work is issuing cards and passing on claims from old folks and heirs. More than 1,000,000 duplicate Social Security cards had to be issued in the last quarter of 1945. Many of the originals were lost when their holders got into uniform. The million was more than the number of new cards issued in that period.

THE board does what it can to keep track of its charges. In order that survivors won't lose through ignorance of their rights, the field staffs have made arrangements with undertakers throughout the country to send in a notice when an eligible person dies. In 1940, when the first old-age-retirement benefits were payable, the Board tried sending reminders to people on their sixty-fifth birthdays. But the defense boom was already under way, and there wasn't much response.

Most of those who have gone onto the retirement rolls either can't help themselves because they're disabled, or they've planned it that way, relying on other income to give them the comforts and luxuries that the government checks don't provide. Surveys by the Social Security Board show that somewhat more than half of the old people live with relatives. Most of them have other income—wages from jobs which do not disqualify them for old-age benefits, pensions, private insurance, relief, dividends, or interest. Some are using up their savings.

What do the old folks think of Social Security? Those on the rolls aren't very articulate, but their most frequent comment is that the allowances aren't big enough to live on. Another source of dissatisfaction is that if they earn more than $14.99 in an occupation covered by law, they don't get their benefit checks for that month.

Some are regular correspondents. An old man in Virginia, for instance, regularly reports on the state of his health. One old lady replied to an inquiry: "No Tom did not have no divorce from me. He put in for a divorce but did not get it . . . he did not have no divorce and I did not eather." Evidence showed, however, that both had remarried.

A husband was worried about proving his wife's age. "When she was born," he wrote, "there was no such thing as birth control."

IN recent years, more than four times as much has been paid to old people through public assistance as through old-age insurance. In the last fiscal year the states and federal government together (the cost is shared roughly fifty-fifty) spent $700,000,000 for old-age assistance alone. About one old person in five is receiving these checks.

Public assistance takes care of more than 2,000,000 old people (more than three times as many as draw old-age insurance benefits), more than 50,000 blind, and about 650,000 children who have no family breadwinner. The money which the federal government advances to the states, matching their payments up to certain limits, comes from its general funds. Some of the states earmark special taxes for the purpose.

Although the cash distributions for public assistance have been rising, work relief hasn't been necessary since the '30s. If work relief is included under the heading of public assistance, the total outlays have shown a great decline since the defense program started. In a single month of 1938, for instance, at the height of the WPA program, more than $300,000,000 was spent for all forms of relief.

The Social Security laws have had no major revision since 1939. Now more than eighty bills, embodying the administration's and many other proposals, have been introduced in the House of Representatives at this session. It is too early to predict what Congress may finally do, but at any rate we have come a long way since the '30s. The days are long past when a sack of groceries and a suit of warm underwear sent by Lady Bountiful in the Big House were enough for a jobless old man. There is no doubt that the country, through Congress, will give increasing recognition to the feeling that the old man and his family must have a decent minimum as a matter of right.

THE END

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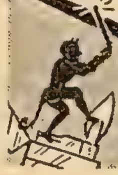

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SIR SKUNK

Continued from Page 22

bear, raccoon, woodchuck, chipmunk, bat, and jumping mouse; and the whole family sleeps away the winter cold contentedly together.

After a gestation period of forty-odd days, the young are born—blind, naked, and helpless—in the home den. The location of that den depends on opportunity; any dry hole, close to the source of food supply, may be enlarged to accommodate the skunk's large family of from four to ten offspring. Spaces under porches or the floors of outbuildings are frequently chosen, and the presence of a family of skunks is a guaranty that the neighborhood will not be troubled with mice. The young remain in the den all spring, never going more than a few yards from its entrance, and living entirely on the mother's milk. At two months they sport the distinctive coats of their kind, glossy black with a white stripe running from ears to shoulders and branching there to form two stripes extending down each side of the back. And at that age they are odoriferously equipped to face the world.

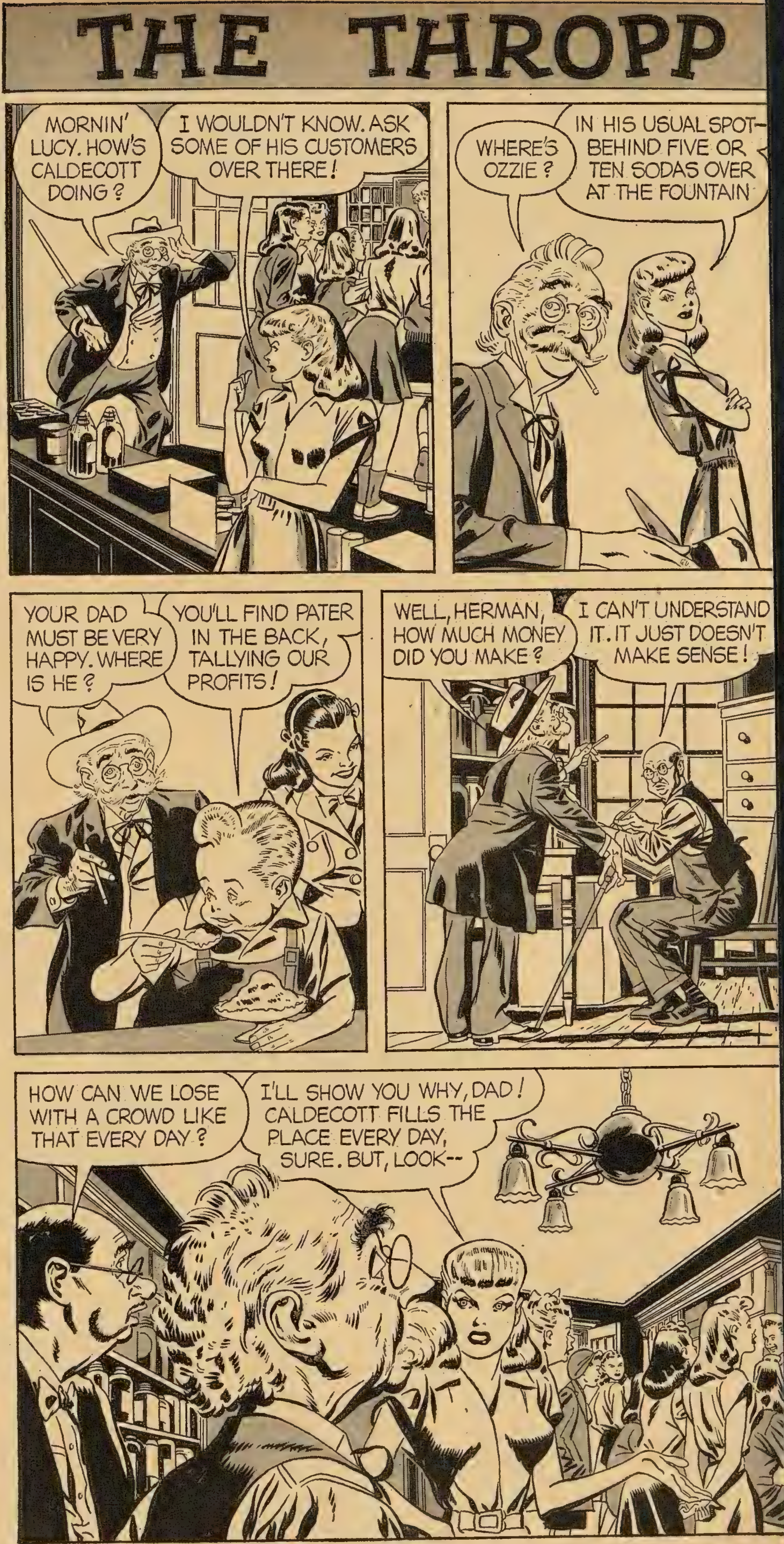
ALTHOUGH sportsmen may condemn the skunk as a predator where game birds and their eggs are concerned, and farmers damn him for his occasional raids on hen houses, grasshoppers are his particular passion. I have seen young skunks catch and eat hoppers until their distended bellies threatened to interfere with locomotion. Suburban dwellers hate the skunk for his proclivity to ruin lawns in his search for grubs. But he will, in a pinch, eat almost anything. Insects, mice, ground squirrels, frogs, crayfish, eggs, chickens, birds, and even carrion are all on his diet list.

He himself is considered inedible by most wild creatures. His chief foe is the great horned owl, and it may be that Bubo can swoop down on his silent wings and whisk Meph into the air before Meph can bring his defensive armament into play. Foxes driven by starvation will sometimes prey on him, too; but with the exception of those two somewhat unfinicky feeders, the skunk is not eaten by other animals.

I have seen Indians eat skunk meat, and they assured me that it was good; but in spite of the clean white appearance of the flesh, most men would have to be mighty, mighty hungry to try it.

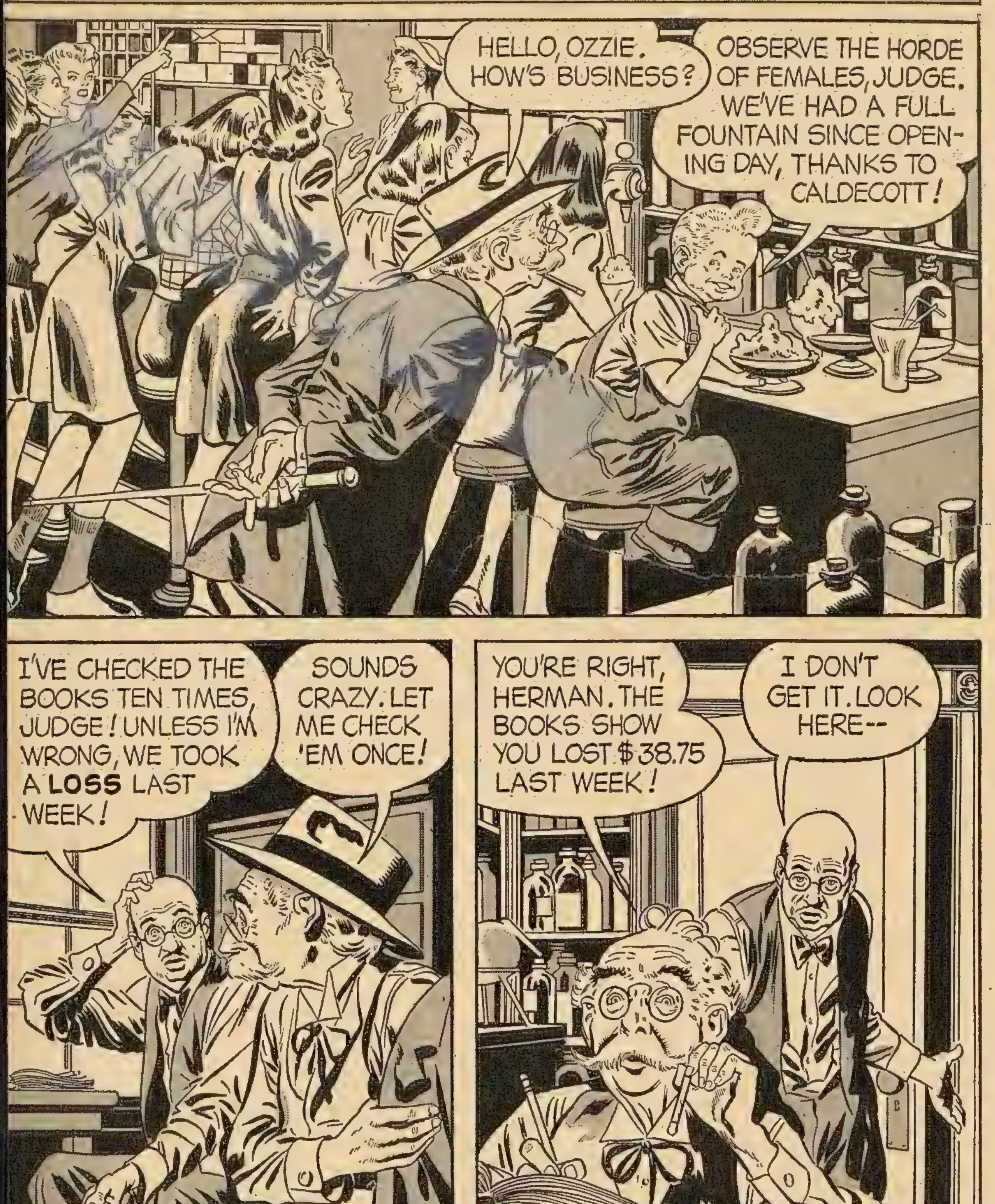
I once spent several months in a mountain cabin in perfect amity with a family of skunks whose den was less than fifty feet from my front door. Our relationship went further than any armed neutrality. After they had grown accustomed to my presence, the skunks seemed to accept me as a friend. But, particularly in the case of the old ones, there

(*Continued on page 82*)


THE THROPP
MORNIN' LUCY. HOW'S CALDECOTT DOING?
I WOULDN'T KNOW. ASK SOME OF HIS CUSTOMERS OVER THERE!
WHERE'S OZZIE?
IN HIS USUAL SPOT—BEHIND FIVE OR TEN SODAS OVER AT THE FOUNTAIN
YOUR DAD MUST BE VERY HAPPY. WHERE IS HE?
YOU'LL FIND PATER IN THE BACK, TALLYING OUR PROFITS!
WELL, HERMAN, HOW MUCH MONEY DID YOU MAKE?
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT. IT JUST DOESN'T MAKE SENSE!
HOW CAN WE LOSE WITH A CROWD LIKE THAT EVERY DAY?
I'LL SHOW YOU WHY, DAD! CALDECOTT FILLS THE PLACE EVERY DAY, SURE. BUT, LOOK--

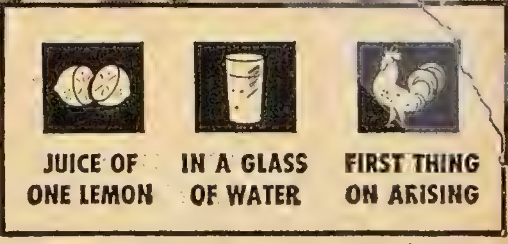
FAMILY

Written by **LAWRENCE LARIAR**
Illustrated by **DONLOU**


HELLO, OZZIE. HOW'S BUSINESS?
OBSERVE THE HORDE OF FEMALES, JUDGE. WE'VE HAD A FULL FOUNTAIN SINCE OPENING DAY, THANKS TO CALDECOTT!
I'VE CHECKED THE BOOKS TEN TIMES, JUDGE! UNLESS I'M WRONG, WE TOOK A LOSS LAST WEEK!
SOUNDS CRAZY. LET ME CHECK 'EM ONCE!
YOU'RE RIGHT, HERMAN. THE BOOKS SHOW YOU LOST $38.75 LAST WEEK!
I DON'T GET IT. LOOK HERE--
YOU CAN'T MAKE MOOLA WHEN EACH CHICK TAKES AT LEAST ONE HOUR TO DRINK A TEN-CENT SODA!
SIMPLY ADORABLE!
YOU FINISHED, JOAN?
DON'T BE A DRIP! I'VE ONLY BEEN HERE TWO HOURS!
ISN'T HE DIVINE?

Continued next week

Millions solve Laxative problem this healthful way: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LEMON and WATER
—first thing on arising

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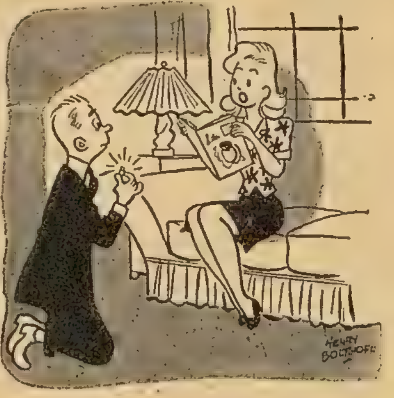

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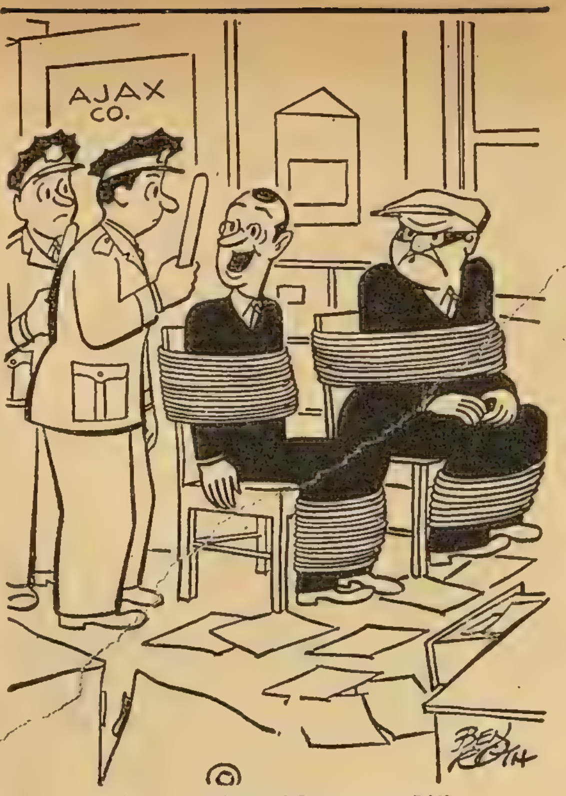


"He was double-crossed!" LIBERTY

was no surrender of what they deemed their natural rights, nor any concession where their dignity was concerned. Sometimes I would set out a pan of table scraps for them, and pa, ma, and the five young ones would feed undisturbed at my very feet; at other times we would pass each other casually in my front yard.

The trail leading to the small clearing around the cabin wound through an almost impenetrable growth of mountain laurel, so dense that I have heard the mountain men claim "Hit's so damn thick that a body can't stick a butcher knife into hit to the hilt, nowhar." Frequently I've met one of the old skunks returning from its nocturnal rambles on that path, and never once did they fail to insist on my giving them the road. Once or twice I tried to talk things over with them, but they were adamant in demanding their prerogatives.

The oldster would accept my presence calmly, standing and thinking things over. Encouraged by the absence of any hostile signs, I'd take a tentative step forward, but a forepaw would stamp sharply on the ground, the movement so emphatic that I could almost hear its impact. Talking softly and in a conciliatory tone, I would slide forward another foot, and both forepaws would come into action, alternately stamping the earth with as much assurance as an elephant could have shown. Another step, and up would go his tail. Knowing that it was by no means necessary for him to do an about-face before firing, I always gave up at that point and conceded him the right of way.

IT once took some strong pleading on my part to argue a visitor out of wreaking vengeance on my friends. He was a mountain man, and as jealous of his dignity and rights as any skunk could be. He had told me he was going to drop by and I was on the lookout for him. I started down the path to meet him, and it was a good thing I did, for we met to find one of the skunks trapped between us. "Git back," called the man, as he drew a gun from a shoulder holster. "He'll shore as hell spray things when the ball hits him."

"Wait a minute," I begged. "He's sort of a pet of mine and I don't want him killed."

I eventually argued him out of his intention, and we both got back in the brush to clear the path. The knowledge that I was a more or less unpredictable "furriner" probably helped. But I never got any thanks from the skunk clan. However, I like to believe that they occasionally remember the man who got along so well with them.

Another time I owned a pointer dog who hated skunks with an abiding hatred. I was hunting pheasants in New York state when Mike encountered his first skunk. He attacked on sight—and immediately became a sadder but wiser dog.

The discharge took him full in the face, and instantly he was blind, deaf, and very, very nauseated. It was thirty minutes before he was ready to resume the hunt. The skunk didn't even hurry as he left the scene of victory.

I tried to keep upwind from Mike as we finished out our hunt. Peculiarly enough, a dog still has a nose for birds even when reeking with skunk musk. That night I labored over him with a solution of water, vinegar, and ammonia, the only thing I've ever found that will neutralize the odor of skunk. But for several weeks rainy weather would bring an unmistakable aroma from Mike's coat, and he was anything but pleasant company.

THE pup sensed that he was an object of aversion to his boss, and his humiliation must have added fuel to his hatred of skunks ever afterward. But he tempered that hatred with common sense. Whenever he found a skunk, and he met dozens of them, he used tactics which seemed to satisfy his animosity without subjecting him to the danger of another spraying. He would back carefully away for thirty or forty yards, and then go for the skunk at top speed, swerving within ten or fifteen feet before reaching him, and chopping out a gruff *"Whuffff!"* which plainly told the skunk exactly what Mike thought of him, as he went by. He would repeat the procedure three or four times, and then, honor satisfied, would start his quest for birds again.

I know of a case where a skunk proved unmistakably that he could accept a human as a friend and welcome assistance with no offensive actions. It is by no means uncommon for a skunk to trap himself through gluttony. Discarded condensed-milk cans have a special attraction for them, and they will push their heads in to lick out the residue, only to be caught by the jagged edges of the cut tin and condemned to death by thirst and starvation.

A woman I know found a skunk in this predicament wandering blindly through the woods. She was not only an exceptionally kindhearted lady, but possessed of far more courage than I. In telling of it afterward, she insisted that when she began to speak softly to the animal, he stopped short, blind head turned questioningly in her direction. She went gradually up to him and placed a hand on his back. Only the skunk could explain his placidity as he waited patiently for the tin to be bent back and the can removed from his head. Once free, he stood for a minute or two, looking at his benefactor, then ambled off into the brush. Personally, I would just about as soon have pulled that thorn from the foot of Androclus' lion!

So the next time someone refers to you as a skunk, remember that old Mephitis isn't such a bad citizen after all. Give him the respect he considers his due, and he can be a pleasant and informative neighbor. After all, given the power of speech, he might resent the comparison more than you do.

THE END

TAKE THAT VACATION ANYWAY

Continued from Page 17

There'll be more berths available for transatlantic travel in July than in June, and more still in August as vessels are converted from war uses.

If you journey far, however, it's important to get your return space arranged before you leave, or be ready to stay quite a while. Steamship operators to Tahiti in the spring were ready to book passengers *to* but not *from,* and advertisements of transatlantic lines stressed the fact that America-bound space was reserved for quite a time ahead. But if you've got the yen to go, don't give up before you try. Somebody will ride—it might be you. Before you abandon your trip, even to bomb-devastated Manila, make some inquiries.

If your heart is set on the voyage, perhaps it can be wangled, if not the very hour you first select, perhaps in due time and sooner than might be expected.

And among foreign lands easy to reach is Canada—French Canada—as foreign a land as you might ask. And Mexico is foreign and, even for the budget bound, not too far away.

Guatemala and the lands of our other neighbors to the south haven't too many available hotel rooms, and ships are few and far between, but air-line operations are being expanded; services increased, and restrictions being lifted all along the line. Somebody will go. Why not you?

Passengers to the islands of the Caribbean may find ships infrequent and small, but planes operate daily; food stocks are increasing, and the "Tourists welcome" sign is being polished up in nearly every port from Robinson Crusoe's island of Tobago to beautiful Jamaica. Three hundred passengers a day may journey from Florida to Havana by plane.

Nearly all the Caribbean islands are less than a day away from the U. S. A.

OF course the wise thing to do is to return to a vacationland you already have sampled. A letter of inquiry from an old customer is likely to get better attention than one from a stranger. But if you want to venture into new channels, it is definitely worth a try. Somebody's going to sit at the captain's table on a round-the-world freighter; a girl in slacks will climb the rigging of a coastwise schooner; someone will ride a paint horse out over the desert from a Western dude ranch; there are 1,700 licensed guides in the State of Maine (as against 2,031 before the war).

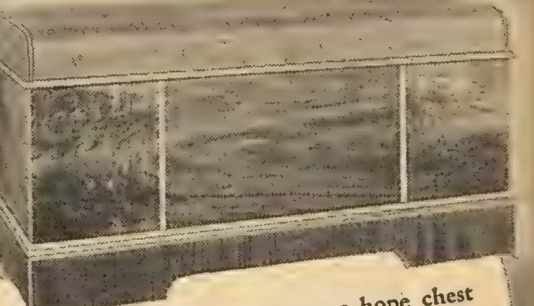
Not everybody need stay at home. Things are crowded, people are busy, but there'll be a lot of vacation pleasure for a mighty lot of people during the coming months. There's no need for you to miss your rest and relaxation period. Start planning now. It can be done.

ABOUT YOUR VACATION—HOW

BY MOTOR: Check with auto clubs; watch for overnight accommodations early in the day if you travel during rush season; many motor courts reopened after being occupied by war workers; guest houses in towns again taking overnight visitors. Many local auto-club offices can aid travelers who arrive before dark.

BY RAIL: Some new coach trains now, others expected during the summer. Almost all Pullman routes restored, but not too many extra trains available for busiest seasons. Some new luxury trains expected. Food will be better in diners. Redcaps scarce but still to be found.

BY WATER: Only a few lake and coastwise steamers. New car ferry from Key West to Havana; others expected in coastwise service, as New York to Boston (converted landing ships make good car ferries). Round-the-world freighter service started, passenger liners soon. Other freighters few and booked far in advance, but increasing service available. Luxury liners returned to operation by late fall on most routes, but few if any cruises expected. New ships being built not likely to help in many places this summer, but service expected on nearly every major route



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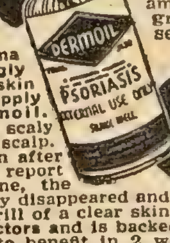

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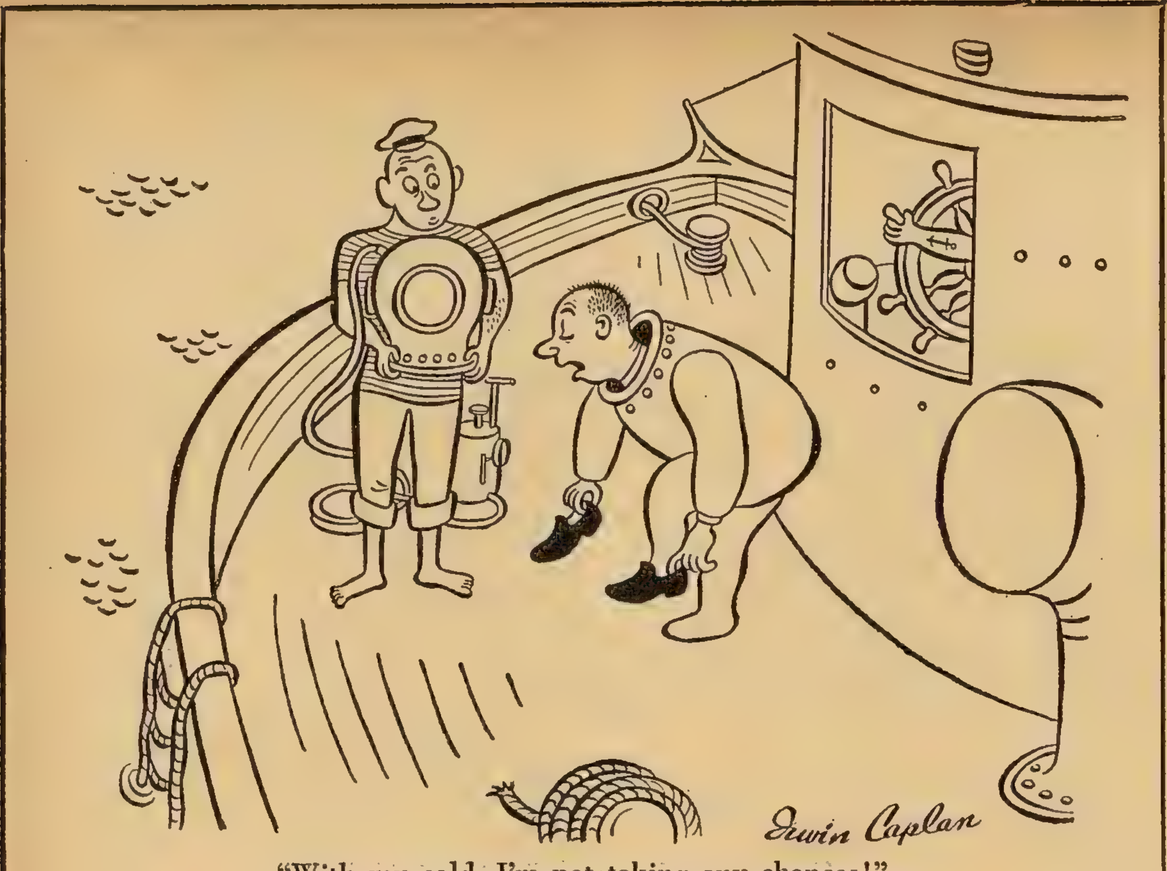

"With my cold, I'm not taking any chances!"

LIBERTY

operated before the war as soon as countries at other end are able to feed and house visitors.

BY AIR: More and better airplanes everywhere. Fifteen to twenty ships a day to Cuba; thirty to sixty passengers daily to Hawaii. Across the continent overnight, with plenty of seats most days of the week. Transocean service expanding. Top of season charter planes available at little over air-line rates. Fares coming down, service going up.

WHERE

EUROPE: Not quite ready for visitors. Food and housing very scant. Business travelers and those willing to take less than the best predominate. Return accommodations difficult.

PACIFIC: Hawaii crowded, but doing business. Some other countries as devastated as Europe, but converting faster as a rule.

CANADA AND NORTHLAND: Good motor roads, some of them new, but doubt one to Alaska. Planes to hunting camps. Big hotels at resorts reopened. Railroads restoring prewar trains. Expect crowds, but ready for many visitors in every province.

SOUTHERN COUNTRIES: *Mexico:* Prices slowly rising, many tourists expected, plenty of food, reasonable transport, resort hotels busy, but increasing in quality of service. *Central America:* Tourists increasing, little ship transport, but good plane service. Guatemala is six hours from New Orleans. *South America:* Some ship transport, but mainly by plane. Fiestas and festivals being resumed. Tourists invited. *Bermuda:* Hotels reopened. Food better than in early days. Service good. Prices reasonable. Plenty of plane seats. *Cuba:* Wide open for the tourist. *Havana:* Entertainment on the upgrade. Highway improvements promised. *Caribbean Islands:* Mainly reached by plane. New hotels planned. Prices slightly up from prewar. Local foods plentiful; imported goods beginning to come in. Some ships in late fall.

U. S. A.: Every state striving to increase accommodations for visitors. Get your reservations confirmed. Big cities will be crowded with rush of conventions. Resort hotels booking lists started early. Country vacations, particularly camp sites and bike and hike trails available at rock-bottom prices and in increasing numbers.

RESTRICTIONS

No passports required of U. S. citizens visiting Bermuda, Canada, Cuba, Guatemala, Mexico, or Nassau, with other countries being added to the open-door list almost any minute.

THE END

LADIES LAST

Continued from Page 9

over the Northern lass. The chances of a Southern girl marrying before she's twenty are twice those of the Northern girl, and eight to five over the Western damsel.

In New England, lady, your chances are the worst, because in a good deal of that section the women outnumber the men. But don't be discouraged; taking the country over, there are, contrary to the general impression, more men than women. According to the census, it's 1,007 men to each 1,000 women. Altogether, there are 450,000 more men than women, and a girl can go where they are, can't she?

Occupations affect your matrimonial opportunities, too. If you work in the country, you have a slight margin (5 per cent) on the city miss; and if you're a machine operator in a factory, you're 2½ per cent less likely to wed than if you go into domestic service.

(But, according to the tables, you'll live longer rattling keys on a typewriter than rattling stove lids in somebody else's kitchen. The typist is in a job 34 per cent safer than average, while the cook's occupation is 28 per cent riskier than average.)

ONCE you are married, the actuary can give you some pretty definite indications as to what will happen to you—as a statistical unit, though not as an individual wife—after you shake the rice out of your wedding finery.

As a farmer's wife you will have 3.49 children, which is 1.32 more than you'll have if you're an urban worker's spouse. Of course you can't have a fraction of a child, but that's the mathematics of it.

On the farm or in the city, you'll have most of your offspring before you are thirty. The number of your children will be pretty directly related to your husband's occupation and income, and in inverse ratio. By which the actuary means that as a skilled worker's wife, you'll have a smaller family than as a laborer's spouse; that as the helpmate of an executive, you'll have still fewer children; as wife of a professional man, the family will be further reduced; and (here's the economic exception) if your husband has a clerical job, you'll have the smallest family of all.

The actuary will warn you that the first five years of wedlock are the hardest, and that more marriages go on the rocks during that time than at any other period. Despite an increasing divorce rate, however, actuarial figures show that if you marry at twenty, you have the prospect of forty years of wedded life; at twenty-five, you can look forward to thirty-seven years of matrimony; and at forty, you have an excellent chance of still being married to the same husband at sixty-five.

Unless you married a man five years younger than you are, you will outlive him. But you are not likely to be a widow before you are forty, and it won't be until you are nearing sixty that widowhood is the probability. And, when you marry, you can expect, statistically, at least two years more of wedded felicity than your mother could, and nearly five years more of life.

Viewing you as one of those little graph figures that illustrate his charts, the actuary can give you some interesting facts. None of them may fit you as an individual, but to one of 45,000,000 women who make up the average they have a good deal of significance. If you're married—and the tables show you probably are—you're three years younger than your husband. As a graph-

A LONG TALE FOR ALL MEN, ESPECIALLY TALL MEN

"War restrictions removed from men's shirt-tails."—*News Item.*

Curtail the curtailing of shirttails,
Is the gist of a welcome decree.
Too short for too long
Was the gents'-wear sarong—
So brief that, in brief, you could see.

The shorn, forlorn shirt never covered
The subject, or masculine pelt.
The bolero effect
Hit a man's self-respect
Where the shirt didn't—south of the belt.

So the long and the short of my story:
Though the bare midriff's chic on his aunts,
Long tailless as Manx-
Es a man bursts with thanks
For *a shirt that stays poked in his pants.*

—*Ethel Jacobson.*

woman, you are five feet three and one sixth inches tall, and you weigh about 120 pounds. You are nearly an inch taller and approximately three pounds heavier than your mother. If you don't watch your diet and count your calories, you'll put on thirteen surplus pounds between thirty and fifty.

And on that subject of avoirdupois, the actuary has some rather extraordinary observations: It is pretty generally known to laymen that overweight women don't live as long as underweights, but the startling fact is that medium or normal-weight women don't live as long as the skinny ones. Tuberculosis is about the only disease that takes a greater toll of the ultra-svelte than of the average, and that toll isn't great enough to make much of a dent in the relative general mortality.

Also the actuary finds that tall gals have a mortality rate 6 per cent less than those of medium height, and nearly 13 per cent less than that of the tinier type. So it's a good idea to be a bean pole.

On the matter of women's occupations as they affect feminine mortality rates, the actuary's information is far less comprehensive than that about men's. Several surveys, however, indicate that as a housewife you will have a 12-per-cent better chance to go the Biblical distance than if you're a factory worker. But exceptions seem to bob up—for example, you will face less risk making shoes or weaving wool dresses than in wearing them in the home; and as a hairdresser or a manicurist you're just as safe as in your domicile. A job as nurse has a lower-than-average mortality, but it doesn't last as long as that of a homemaker. If you go out for a stage career, you'll be in a comparatively hazardous occupation, 30 per cent more perilous than average, and almost 45 per cent chancier than the housewife's. Being a laundress or a restaurant waitress is riskier than doing the same jobs in your own home.

In the field of industry the difference in the male and female death-by-accident rate is sensational. The figures prove that you, as a woman factory worker, are more than twelve times safer from lethal accident on the job than is your male co-worker. That was the fact in 1940, and though the percentage of women workers leaped enormously in wartime, their mortality from industrial accident did not jump to anything like that of men.

WHEN it comes to violence, your chances of being murdered are only a third as great as a man's, and the likelihood that you'll commit suicide is one half to one third of a man's danger of self-destruction. And here again, as a married woman you're safer from homicide and less prone to suicide than are sod and grass widows or spinsters.

Even in the home, where women spend far more time, and therefore have greater opportunity to break their necks, their actual accident fatality rate is about the same as the men's. Only in the bathroom and in the kitchen do women seem to encounter more lethal casualties. Men—with much less time to do it—fall fatally out of bed, out of windows, down stairs and off ladders about as frequently as their spouses. Twice as many men as women are killed in the garage and around the yard, four times as many from fooling with firearms, and the score on being asphyxiated by gases or burned as a result of smoking in bed is about the same for both sexes.

The low industrial fatality rate for women may be due to their less hazardous jobs, but you can construe the relatively lower fatality ratio in the home to mean that the weaker sex is stronger in using the bean. Traffic casualty records show also that women are more alert as pedestrians and less lethal as drivers.

Women the weaker sex? Lady, that's your cue to laugh. The actuary is already setting the example.

THE END

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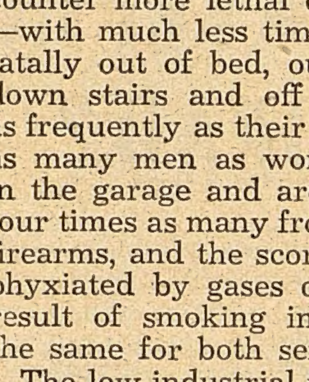

Can't SLEEP?

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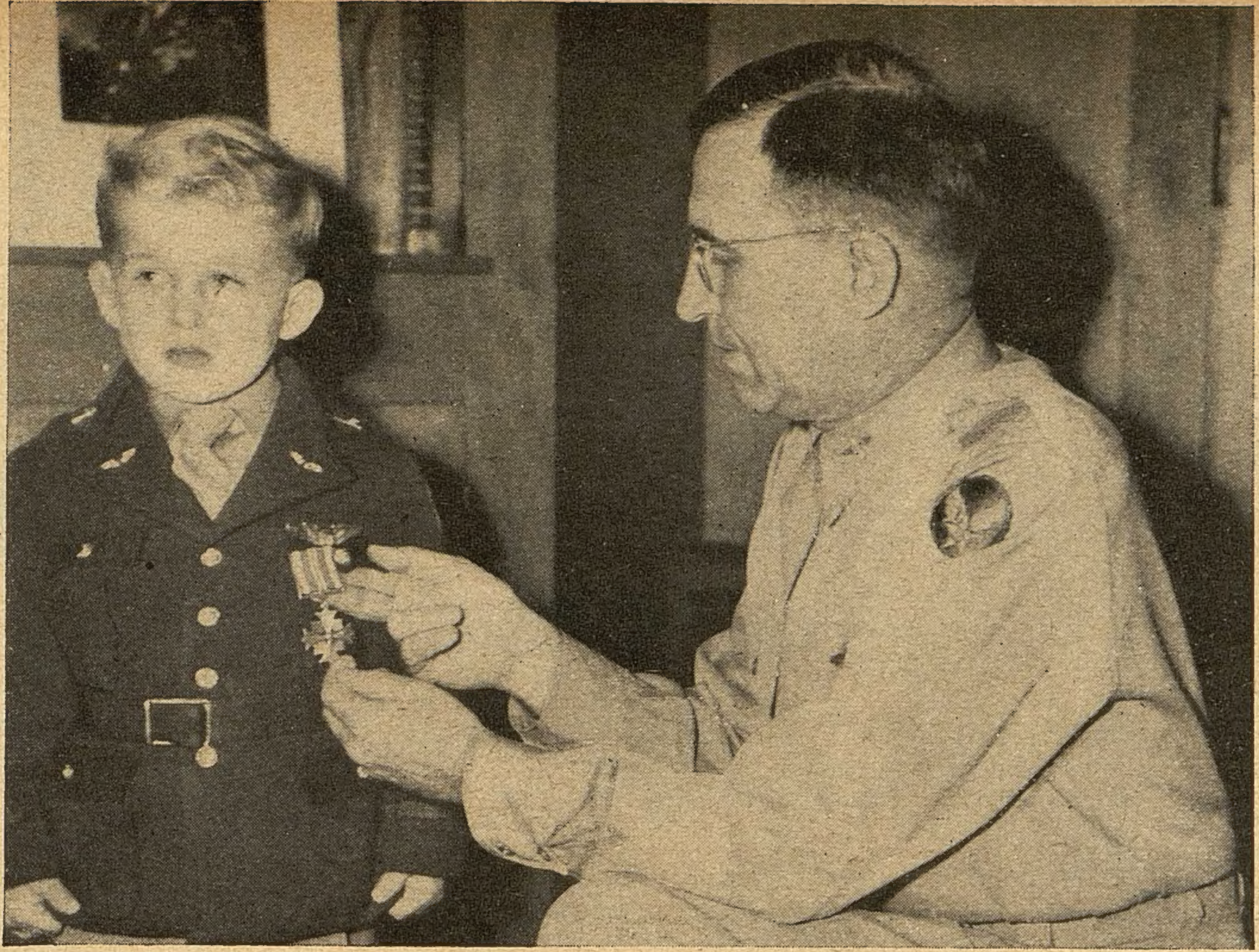
Don't take the day's worries to bed with you—good advice but hard to follow when we're Nervous and Restless. **MILES NERVINE** (Liquid or Effervescent Tablets) helps to relieve nervous tension, to permit refreshing sleep. Why don't you try it when you are **Nervous, Cranky, Restless?** Get it at your drug store—Liquid, **25c and $1.00.** Effervescent Tablets, **35c and 75c. Caution;** read directions and use only as directed. **Miles Laboratories, Inc., Elkhart, Ind.**

Miles NERVINE

JUNE 1, 1946

PAUL HUNTER
Publisher
EDWARD MAHER
Editor



Memorial Day has a sad meaning for this boy, who has a medal instead of a dad.

ARE WE KEEPING OUR PLEDGE TO THE DEAD?

AGAIN it is Memorial Day, and this year the heroic dead we pause to honor are greater in number than ever before. World War II, the biggest, costliest and most brutal in all history, has added more than a quarter of a million American families to the list of those who mourn on this day.

During the war years it was the custom of Decoration Day orators, and of editorial writers, to stress that the sacrifice of blood being offered up by our young manhood must not be in vain; that when the fighting stopped we must so order the world that war never would come again. Much emphasis was placed on the need for high principles in world affairs, for co-operation and friendship among nations. We were reminded of America's duty to play her part in concert with other peace-loving nations to keep the peace.

It is fitting, therefore, on this first Memorial Day after total victory, to examine our progress and the progress of the world toward an era in which all mankind will live in amity. Have we heeded the lessons of the war and of the prewar years? Do we recognize the conditions which lead to war and are we determined to avoid them? Has America turned her back resolutely on isolation and is she resolved to act with other nations to preserve peace?

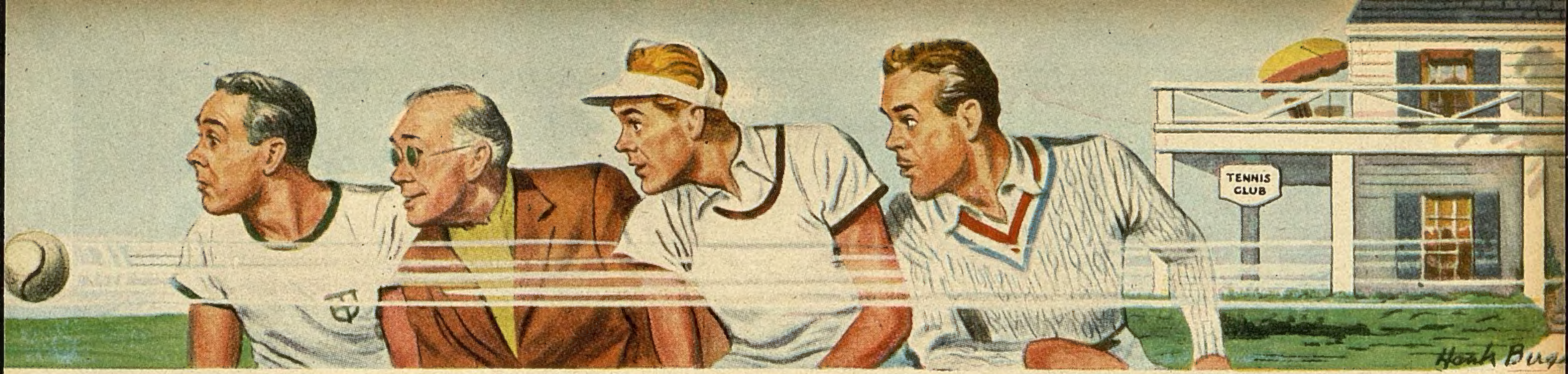
The answers are not clear cut by any means. But this we do know: America is in the United Nations organization and is in it to stay. We have pledged ourselves to use our power and influence to maintain peace. We will do our utmost to substitute the rule of law for the rule of force. We will co-operate economically and culturally with other nations. We will continue to shoulder the major share of the relief and rehabilitation burden. We will maintain the strength to discharge the responsibilities we have assumed.

But many pitfalls still beset the road to peace and the goal is yet distant. Spheres of influence are still sought by ourselves and others. Power politics still flourish. Small nations still tremble. There is hope that under the United Nations' leadership these things will pass and be forgotten as people everywhere realize that peace is indivisible and that injustice and oppression anywhere degrade and harm all men alike.

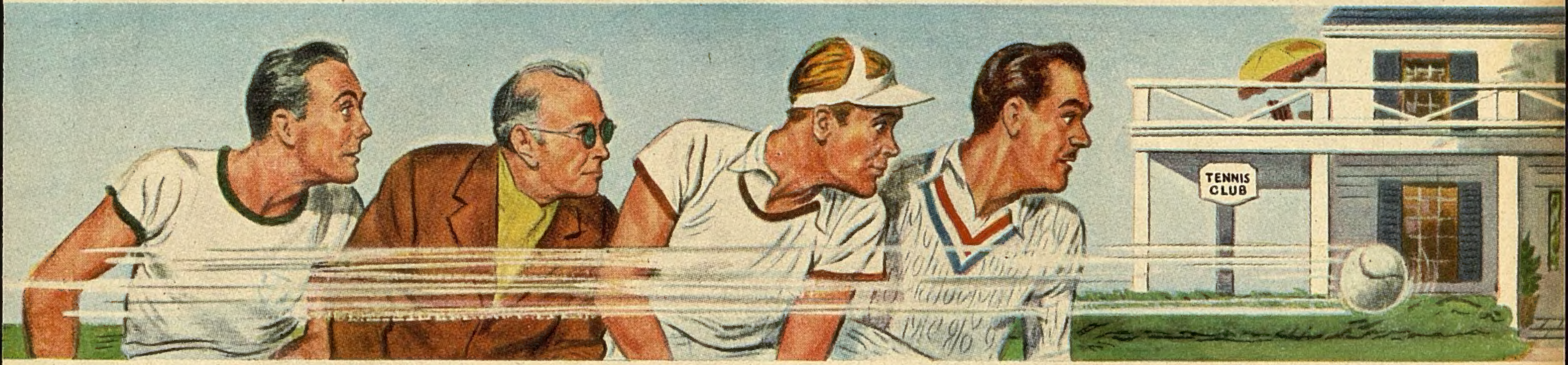
So on this Memorial Day we can turn to the symbols of our dead in good conscience and say that we have made progress. But we must strengthen and develop UN and extend its scope until no nation retains unto itself the right or need to make war. Then we can observe future Memorial Days truly by celebration, as the sorrowful events which are commemorated recede further and further into the past.

Paul Hunter

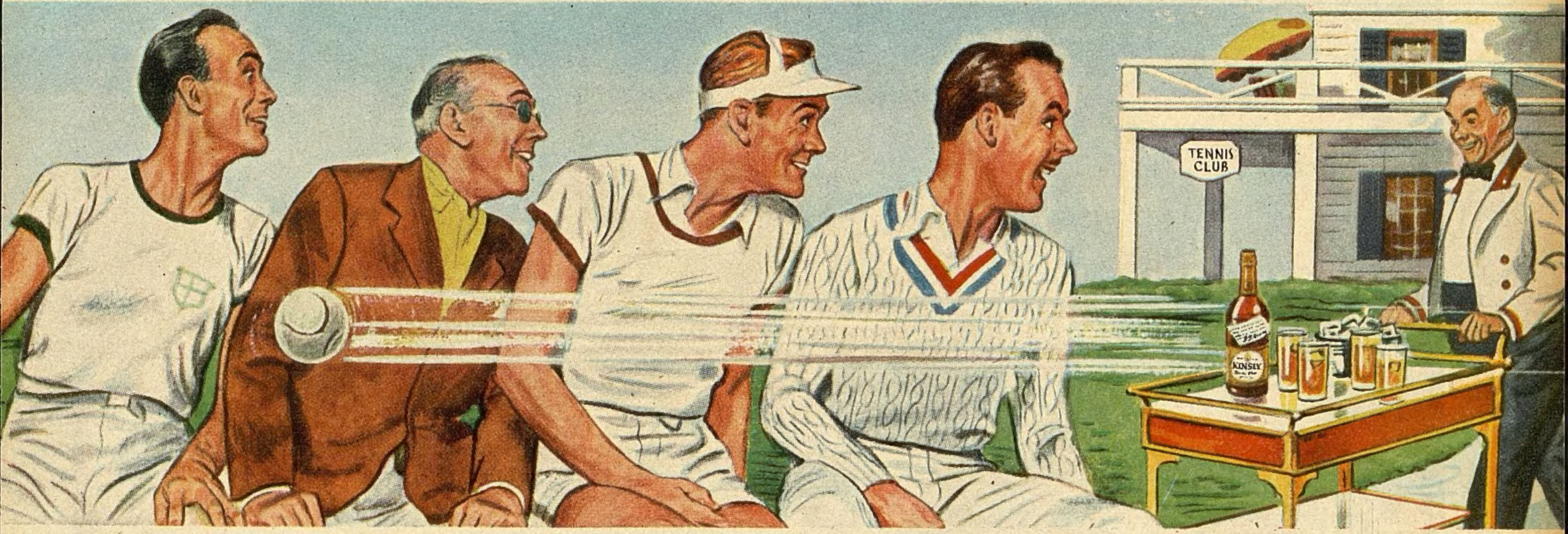
Liberty
. . . FOR ALL


TENNIS CLUB

1—There's nothing like a fast volley to . . .


TENNIS CLUB

2—turn heads back and forth. But when . . .


TENNIS CLUB
KINSEY

3—someone delivers a master stroke like this, it's hard not to . . .

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